Hafa Adai!

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NMCADSV names winners of 'Know Your Worth' competitions. PAGE 5

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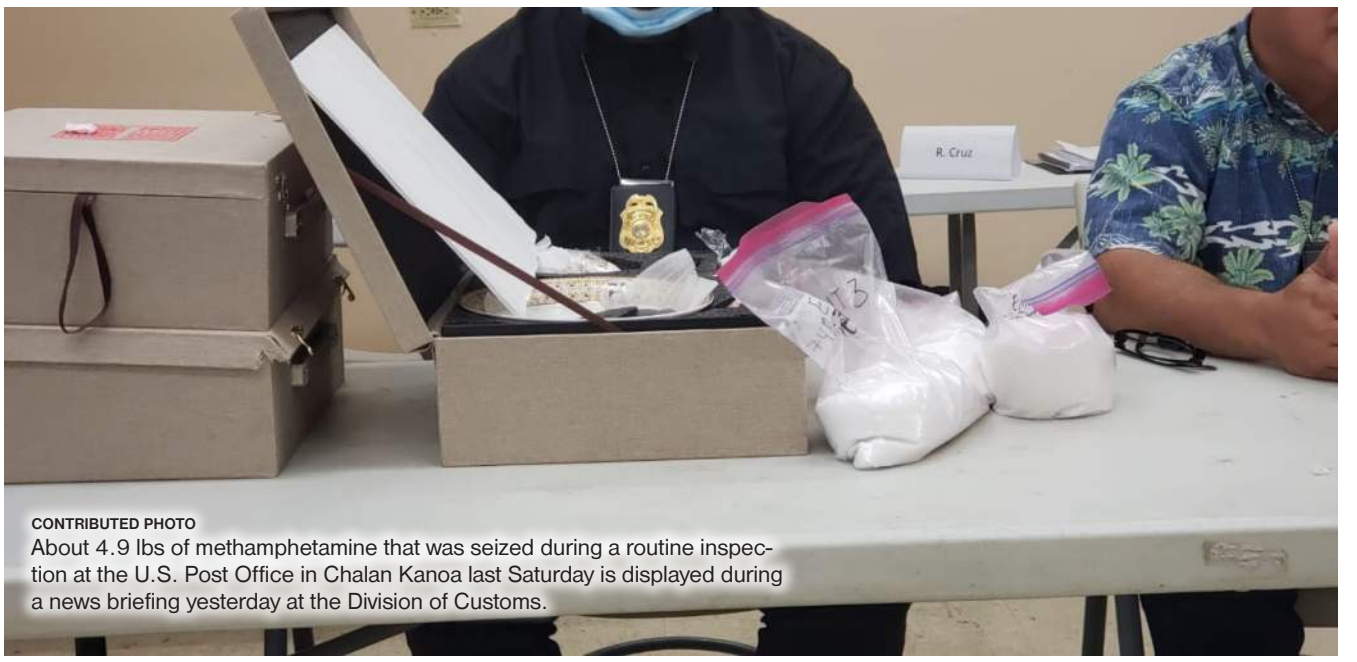
Nearly 5 lbs of 'ice' found in shipment of chinaware



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
About 4.9 lbs of methamphetamine that was seized during a routine inspection at the U.S. Post Office in Chalan Kanoa last Saturday is displayed during a news briefing yesterday at the Division of Customs.

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Department of Finance Customs and Biosecurity and Border Patrol uncovered nearly 5 lbs of methamphetamine or "ice" hidden in boxes of chinaware during a routine inspection at the U.S. Post Office in Chalan Kanoa last Saturday.

It was learned during a news briefing yesterday that officers from the CNMI Department of Finance's Customs and Biosecurity Division seized about 4.9 lbs of methamphetamine at the CK post office last Saturday, making it the largest amount of "ice" seized since 2015, according to Jose

See NEARLY on Page 4

IPI taps US mainland lawyers for hearing on revocation of license

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC will be tapping the services of U.S. mainland lawyers for the hearings on the revocation of its exclusive casino license on Saipan, prompting IPI to ask that the hearings be held in May instead of this month.

Yeom

In an interview with *Saipan Tribune* Thursday, Commonwealth Casino Commission executive director Andrew Yeom disclosed that IPI made a last-minute request during the CCC board meeting last month to hold the revocation hearing this May.

Yeom said that IPI asked

See IPI on Page 4

AT A GLANCE

As of 5:58pm, March 21, 2022

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population Additional Dose Vaccinated: 59.2%

Days since last community transmission: 2

Pfizer/BioNTech	
Initiated:	38,131
Fully Vaccinated:	37,342
Moderna	
Initiated:	5,345
Fully Vaccinated:	5,206
Janssen	
Fully vaccinated:	1,149
Additional Dose:	22,070

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	46,724	85	46,809
Recovered	45,212	44	45,256
Active	1,128	85	1,213
Deaths	339	1	340

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	10,689	0*	10,689
Recovered	10,412	0*	10,412
Active	246	0*	246
Deaths	31	0*	31

*No update

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., https://www.vaccinatecnmi.com/vax-dashboard/

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

Attao declines to serve as House impeachment prosecutor

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Attao

House of Representatives vice speaker Rep. Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan) said yesterday that he is unable to accept or decline to file an appearance as House impeachment prosecutor in the Senate trial of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres.

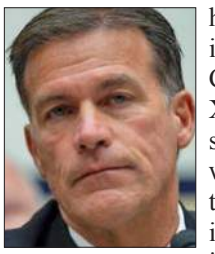
In a letter to Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider (Ind-Saipan), Attao said that, in sending him a notice to file an appearance as the

See ATTAO on Page 4

AP EXCLUSIVE US admiral says China fully militarized isles

By JIM GOMEZ and AARON FAVILA
ASSOCIATED PRESS

OVER THE SOUTH CHINA SEA (AP)—China has fully militarized at least three of several islands it built in the disputed South China Sea, arming them with anti-ship and anti-aircraft missile systems, laser and jamming equipment and fighter jets in an increasingly aggressive move that threatens all nations operating nearby, a top U.S. military commander said Sunday.



Aquilino

U.S. Indo-Pacific commander Adm. John C. Aquilino said the hostile actions were in stark contrast to Chinese President Xi Jinping's past assurances that Beijing would not transform the artificial islands in contested waters into military bases. The efforts were part of China's flexing its military muscle, he said.

"I think over the past 20 years we've witnessed the largest military buildup since World War II by the PRC," Aquilino told The Associated Press in an interview, using the initials of China's formal name. "They have advanced all their capabilities and that

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BUSINESS
Lagging behind Russia in developing hypersonic weapons, the U.S. Navy is rushing to field its first.

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WORLD
Russia demanded that Ukrainians put down their arms and surrender. Ukraine said no.

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OVERDRIVE
Buying an electric car is a lot easier than buying a home charger and getting it installed.

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Local

MCS inducts 57 new NEHS and NJHS members

Fifty-seven students were inducted into Mount Carmel School's Father Arnold Bendowski National Elementary Honor Society and the Immaculate Heart Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society in a ceremony on Friday, March 18, 2022, at Mount Carmel Cathedral.

The ceremony was led by Bishop Ryan P. Jimenez, Mount Carmel School's board of directors chair Vicente Babauta, administrators, and society officers.

The inductees were selected by a faculty council that reviewed applications from sophomores and upperclassmen who had maintained a grade point average of 3.75 or higher and had demonstrated how they had fulfilled the society's values of scholarship, service, leadership, character, citizenship, and responsibility.

This year's inductees into the Father Arnold Bendowski National Elementary Honor Society are Ryusei Asai, Cali Jade Cabrera, David Joseph Camacho, Ezaela Patrice Camacho, Kathleen Cano, Jeongwoo Choi, Nea Zoe Dandan, Avah Mae Delacruz, Miana Dolores Delacruz, Bella, Reese Deleon Guerrero, Krish Devjani, Karl Angelo Diaz, Maria Guerrero, Mikayla Guerrero, Von Derick Lauron, Ji Woo Lee, Ki Eun Lee, Angelo Li, Chloe Anne Marie Matsunaga, Amber, Faith Militante, Paige Kanae Muna, Ava Carmina Sablan, O-Ren Fumiyo Sasamoto, Kainoa Tenorio, Victoria Eve Terlaje, Advika Vallabhaneni Kennani, Vinae Villagomez, and Lydia Xian.

This year's inductees into the Immaculate Heart Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society are Janessa Francine Arriola, Mary Audrey Bansil, Kimason Cabrera, Zion Jude Cabrera, Dylan Jacob Camacho, Seungwoo Choi, Rafael Elijah De Belen, Jasmine Meleana Deleon Guerrero, Arthur Deliva, Ciana Lei Demapan, John Matthew Ellama, Cassidee Jolina Flores, SerenityAnne Fujihara, Katherine Hwang, Lance Jericho Javier, Do Geon Kim, Kayla Rose Larson, Naomi Skye Matsumoto, Remiegem Melchor, Michael Mercado, Jr., Layla Carmen Ann Palacios, Jadine Nicole Pangelinan, Cyril Michael Pangilinan, Jener Franz Pineda, Alexia Aulene Rubia,

See MCS on Page 4

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Twenty-eight elementary school students are inducted into Mount Carmel School's Father Arnold Bendowski National Elementary Honor Society in a ceremony on Friday, March 18, 2022, at Mount Carmel Cathedral.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Twenty-nine junior high school students are inducted into Mount Carmel School's Immaculate Heart Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society in a ceremony on Friday, March 18, 2022, at Mount Carmel Cathedral.

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ONE OF THE GREATEST GIFTS YOU CAN GIVE IS YOUR TIME.

Author: Abhishek Tiwary

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IT&E

Muña says Presumptive Medicaid may be extended anew

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. is optimistic that presumptive eligibility for Medicaid will get another extension.

It was learned at a press briefing last Friday that presumptive eligibility for the Medicaid program was supposed to expire this April but CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña said that CHCC is expecting to have that extended up to June 2022.

"The presumptive eligibility for Medicaid is expiring next month. We are expecting a possible extension of the program up to June. However, this [won't be decided by us] as it is a federal program," Muña said.

She explained that because the presumptive Medicaid program was established pursuant to the National Public Health Emergency put in place due to COVID-19, a two-months' notice should have been given before the public health emergency is lifted, ending the program.

Muña

"[The program] is based on the National Public Health Emergency. We are expecting an extension and the reason for that is because we understood that it requires at least two months' notice before the public health emergency ends. If it [expires] next month, it's less than two months. So that's not enough time. They're supposed to give ample time for us to notify the community that the Public Health Emergency is ending. Once the Public Health Emergency Ends, then Medicaid presumptive eligibility ends," she said.

However, even if the program ends, there will still be a redetermination period to determine whether those who availed of presumptive Medicaid qualify for regular Medicaid.

"For those individuals that are presumed eligible, the Medicaid Office will determine whether they're eligible for regular Medicaid. So for those eligible for presumptive Medicaid before, the Medicaid Office will let you know if you have an opportunity to apply for the regular Medicaid," she explained.

Presumptive eligibility, or PE, is an expedited process of enrolling eligible residents in the CNMI Medicaid program. It allows patients to have their care covered while waiting for their application to be fully processed.

It offers immediate access to health care while applying for regular Medicaid or other health coverage. You can start using PE for Medicaid coverage right away for Medicaid covered services, such as doctor visits, hospital care, and some prescription drugs.

Starting the day you are approved for PE, you are able to go to any health care provider that accepts Medicaid.

Individuals and families are eligible for Medicaid if their attested gross income does not exceed 180% of the Supplemental Security Income federal benefit, which is about $28,800 annually for a family of four.

Aggreko contract to be extended in $1.6M deal

LEIGH GASES
Commonwealth Utilities Corp. executive director Gary P. Camacho during an interview yesterday in his office.

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. will extend again its temporary power supply agreement with portable generator supplier Aggreko next month at a cost of $1.6 million.

CUC executive director Gary P. Camacho said yesterday that the extension is needed because a new power engine that CUC had purchased will come in from Germany sometime in May this year to replace the old one at Power Plant 1. The new engine will produce 10 megawatts of power.

Aggreko "will continue to be here throughout the arrival, installation, and commencement of the new engine," Camacho said. Also, one engineer will be here the following year to monitor the new engine.

Aggreko was hired to provide a temporary electric power supply while CUC's engines are down for overhaul and repair.

In a meeting last year, it was learned that on average, Saipan needs 33MW of power supply. The peak load is 37MW. Presently, the plant is restricted to 36MW, with 8MW of reserve and this includes 12MW of power provided by Aggreko.

Furthermore, Aggreko already completed overhaul of Engine 7 last September. However, there is more work that needs to be done on engines 1 and 3.

According to Camacho, a lot of the work has been deferred over the years. Last year, new funding allowed CUC to coordinate with the different contractors working on rehabilitating the old engines. The funding for this new extension came from the governor's office.

The original contract with Aggreko was that it would provide temporary power on Saipan for 90 days, while CUC's generator engines are being overhauled and repaired. That contract was first extended in January 2020 for another 90 days, and then twice extended again. Early last year, CUC extended its power supply deal with Aggreko to September.

Camacho assures that that they will "try to finish as quick[ly] as we can and there's now a lot of activity."

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39 new citizens sworn in just before Covenant Day

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. District Court for the NMI swore in 39 new U.S. citizens in two back-to-back naturalization ceremonies yesterday in celebration of Commonwealth Covenant Day and International Women's Month.

According to District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona, yesterday's naturalization ceremonies were in celebration of two meaningful events: first, Commonwealth Covenant Day, and second, International Women's Month.

Manglona said the naturalized citizens will begin their new lives as citizen by joining the CNMI community in celebrating Commonwealth Covenant Day, which gave the Marianas the privilege of becoming U.S. citizens in the first place.

"Nearly 46 years ago today, March 24, 1976, Gerald Ford signed the joint resolution that established the relationship between the United States and the future Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands. It is a day to celebrate the unique relationship between the CNMI and the United States. It also has a significant meaning for us here in the District Court because it was through this covenant that the District Court for the NMI was established," she said.

During the morning naturalization ceremony, Manglona also acknowledged that the entire first batch of 21 beneficiaries all hailed from the Philippines.

One of the newly naturalized citizens, Maria O'Malley, even wore a traditional Filipino "batik" dress in honor of her culture.

"It is really an honor. It's been a long journey. I know all 21 of us naturalized citizens are really happy and proud to be part of this country. It's a bit overwhelming but I'm so glad that we got it done," she said.

Aside from O'Malley, the first batch of naturalized citizens included Sheryl Rose Manago Alarzar, Leonardo Almario Aque, Ella Ballesteros Babauta, Ronnie Domingo Bondoc, Lina Lastimoso Cabrera, Aurelio and Rosanna Cayabyab, Armi Dispo Cucal, Erlinda Reyes Dalupo, Ana Lisa Faranal Delos Reyes, Luzviminda Pineda Domingo, Nida Rodriguez Dosalua, Ana Myrra Pineda Francisco, Vivencio Leyno Martin, Maria Loren Palacio Priest, Antonietta Romero Aquino San Gabriel, Corazon Suelto San Gabriel, Gener Ravelo San Nicolas, Dulce Olarte Tudela, and Evangeline Landicho.

The second batch of naturalized citizens included Cristina Contreras Acquiatan, Mamerto Aguilar Arboliras, Juanita Mole Arriola, Shiela Marisy Borja, Maria Felicitas Delos Santos Camacho, Maria Jocelyn Jao Cruz, Rosalina Demot Dipus, Hwa Mi Park Elliott, Clemencia Ubas Gabio, Randy Joey Dalida Garcia, Rashidul Islam, Julieta Rueda Jones, Marvirick Yacan Joyce, Marjory Antonio Kozij, Miguel Baplor Lagare, Leonardo Pangoen Laoyan, Arlene Anico Muna, and Xing Norman Jun.

US

From Page 1

buildup of weaponization is destabilizing to the region."

There were no immediate comments from Chinese officials. Beijing maintains its military profile is purely defensive, arranged to protect what it says are its sovereign rights. But after years of increased military spending, China now boasts the world's second largest defense budget after the U.S. and is rapidly modernizing its force with weapons systems including the J-20 stealth fighter, hypersonic missiles and two aircraft carriers, with a third under construction.

Aquilino spoke with the AP onboard a U.S. Navy reconnaissance aircraft that flew near Chinese-held outposts in the South China Sea's Spratly archipelago, one of the most hotly contested regions in the world. During the patrol, the P-8A Poseidon plane was repeatedly warned by Chinese callers that it illegally entered what they said was China's territory and ordered the plane to move away.

"China has sovereignty over the Spratly islands, as well as surrounding maritime areas. Stay away immediately to avoid misjudgment," one of the stern radio messages said in a veiled threat.

But the U.S. Navy plane dismissed the multiple warnings and pressed on defiantly with its reconnaissance in brief but tense moments witnessed by two AP journalists invited onboard. "I am a sovereign immune United States naval aircraft conducting lawful military activities beyond the national airspace of any coastal state," a U.S. pilot radioed back to the Chinese.

"Exercising these rights is guaranteed by international law and I am operating with due regard to the rights and duties of all states," he said.

Navy commanding officer Joel Martinez, who led the P-8A Poseidon's crew, said there has been an incident when a Chinese jet flew close to a U.S. aircraft in a dangerous maneuver in the disputed region. The U.S. flight crew calmly reminded the Chinese to comply with aviation safety regulations, he said.

As the P-8A Poseidon flew as low as 15,000 feet (4,500 meters) near the Chinese-occupied reefs, some appeared to be like small cities on screen monitors, with multi-story buildings, warehouses, hangars, seaports, runways and white round structures Aquilino said were radars. Near Fiery Cross, more than 40 unspecified vessels could be seen apparently anchored.

Aquilino said the construction of missile arsenals, aircraft hangars, radar systems and other military facilities on Mischief Reef, Subi Reef and Fiery Cross appeared to have been completed but it remains to be seen if China will pursue the construction of military infrastructure in other areas.

"The function of those islands is to expand the offensive capability of the PRC beyond their continental shores," he said. "They can fly fighters, bombers plus all those offensive capabilities of missile systems."

He said any military and civilian plane flying over the disputed waterway could easily get within range of the Chinese islands' missile system.

"So that's the threat that exists, that's why it's so concerning for the militarization of these islands," he said. "They threaten all nations who operate in the vicinity and all the international sea and airspace."

China sought to shore up its vast territorial claims over virtually the entire South China Sea by building island bases on coral atolls nearly a decade ago. The U.S. responded by sending its warships through the region in what it calls freedom of operation missions. The United States has no claims itself but has deployed Navy ships and aircraft for decades to patrol and promote free navigation in international waterway and airspace.

China routinely objects to any action by the U.S. military in the region. The other parties—the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei—claim all or part of the sea, through which approximately $5 trillion in goods are shipped every year.

Despite China's aggression, the long-simmering territorial conflicts should only be resolved peacefully, Aquilino said, and cited the Philippine government's successful move to bring its disputes with China to international arbitration in 2013 as a good template.

A U.N.-backed arbitration tribunal that handled the case invalidated China's sweeping historical claims in the South China Sea under the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea. Beijing dismissed the ruling as sham and continues to defy it.

Washington's main objective in the disputed region is "to prevent war" through deterrence and promote peace and stability, including by engaging American allies and partners in projects with that objective, Aquilino said.

"Should deterrence fail, my second mission is to be prepared to fight and win," said Aquilino, who leads the largest U.S. combatant command with 380,000 military and civilian personnel covering 36 nations and territories.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

ATTAO

From Page 1

House impeachment prosecutor, it appears that Sen. Karl R. King-Nabors (R-Tinian) has attempted to serve him the notice in his capacity as chairman of the House Special Impeachment Committee. He said that King-Nabors, who is the Senate Committee on the Impeachment Hearing chairman, served him the notice "at the time the impeachment vote was voted on and passed."

By that time, though, Attao said, the House had already adopted the Articles of Impeachment, the House Impeachment Committee no longer existed, and that he ceased to be its chairman.

Even then, if he were in a position to serve as the impeachment prosecutor, Attao said he hereby declines.

King-Nabors had said Friday that, pursuant to Senate Impeachment Rule 7, if the House speaker declines to serve as the impeachment prosecutor, then the chairperson of the House committee at the time the impeachment was voted and passed shall serve as the impeachment prosecutor.

Attao was the chairman of the House Impeachment Committee when the House passed House Resolution 22-14 that impeached Torres for alleged commission of felonies, corruption, and neglect of duty.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

IPI

From Page 1

for the extension because their lawyers from Washington, D.C. are going to attend the CCC's next board meeting this month to finalize the schedule of the revocation hearing.

IPI did not indicate how many lawyers will be coming.

Yeom said that IPI's extension request was pretty much granted because he did not object to it. "I guess they understand that this is the final one. This is a revocation hearing," Yeom said. "This is their final chance to comply."

He conceded that he was not happy with the extension request because they were planning to hold the revocation hearing at the end of this month. He said IPI has had enough time because he filed the five complaints against IPI—each one seeking the immediate revocation of its exclusive Saipan casino license—in September 2021.

The complaints accused IPI of unwillingness to comply with the CCC's final order in five enforcement actions that were previously entered against IPI.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

NEARLY

From Page 1

Mafnas, DOF Customs and Biosecurity director.

"This is the largest amount of meth that has been smuggled into the CNMI since 2015 when Customs intercepted over 10 kilos of methamphetamine at the seaport. We had a few since January 2022, but nothing to the amount of this recent seizure. We've seized at nearly all ports of entry since the beginning of the year. It's not a lot, not as big of an amount as this recent one, but we have been making seizures," he said.

Mafnas said at the news briefing that Customs officers were making a routine inspection at the post office at around 10am last Saturday when they uncovered bags that contained crystal-like substances hidden in between foam molds used to protect the porcelain chinaware that served as a decoy to smuggle in the drugs.

The man suspected of smuggling in these drugs, Zhang Yuzhu, 49, has since been arrested and remains in Department of Corrections custody after failing to pay a bail of $1 million.

"So again, congratulations to all the officers, men and women of the Division of Customs and Biosecurity for stopping contraband, especially ice, from coming into the community. If this had made it out to the community, it would have made a huge, direct impact on the people of the CNMI," Mafnas said.

It was later learned that the methamphetamine that was smuggled into the CNMI last Saturday came from California. The substance was found wrapped and hidden under foam molds used to protect the chinaware during shipping.

Meanwhile, at the Superior Court, Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho imposed a $1 million cash bail on Zhang who was arrested on Saturday for allegedly smuggling drugs.

Zhang is currently facing charges of importation of contraband, illegal possession of a controlled substance, and trafficking of a controlled substance.

Following his bail hearing yesterday, Zhang was remanded back to DOC custody.

MCS

From Page 2

Enzo Umeki Sasamoto, Aya Santos, Jupri Torres, and Cecilia Villagomez.

In her closing remarks, acting school president Frances Taimanao congratulated the students and reminded them that being in the NEHS and NJHS goes beyond academics and prestige. "Remember, this title that you hold now as a member of the honor society does not mean that your work is done. It is just the beginning and you have a lot of work ahead of you," she said. "So I challenge you to continue to strive toward even higher goals. The most important thing to remember is that each of the pillars mentioned earlier are the sum of many individual decisions. They embody a positive attitude backed by purpose and meaning."

Taimanao acknowledged that the foundation of each student's success is grounded by the support of each student's parents. " At the end of this ceremony, thank your parents for all their love, untiring support, and patience. And from all of us at Mount Carmel School, the bishop, board members, we thank you parents and guardians for your support, understanding, and patience during this school year. It is the hardest year since this pandemic started, but we are trying and doing our best to make things happen for our students. Your partnership with us is very important for the success of your child's education," she said.

For more information about Mount Carmel School's academic programs and services, visit www.mountcarmelsaipan.com. ***(PR)***

NMCADSV names winners of 'Know Your Worth' competitions

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence announced live on Zoom and on its Facebook page last Saturday all winners of the first "2022 Know Your Worth" art, essay, and spoken word competition for middle school and high school students.

The contest, held as part of the Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month campaign, was open to all CNMI students in the 6th to 12th grade, and had a Middle School division, grades 6-8, and a High School division, grades 9-12 for each competition category.

For the Art and Essay categories, first place winners won $150 cash prize, second place winners won $100, and third place winners won $75. NMCADSV also hosted an online vote for favorite middle school and high school artwork out of the top 10. The winners received the People's Choice Award and $100. An anonymous donor also provided additional prizes to the top winners including gift certificates for Regal Cinemas Saipan, Tyler's Gelatte Stone, the 670 Café, and Captain Nite's Boat Charter for trips to Mañagaha.

The first-place winner in the Art category in the Middle School division was titled "The Two Sides of Dating" by Gwanhun Son of Saipan Seventh Day Adventist School. The second-place winner was titled "Healthy Relationships vs. Abusive Relationships" by Verica He of Dandan Middle School. The third-place winner was titled "Teen Dating Violence + Healthy Relationships" by Kyla Marie Diestro of Dandan Middle School. The winner of the People's Choice Award was titled "Sometimes fantasies aren't what they seem" by Sheryne Yang of Saipan Community School.

The first-place winner in the Art category in the High School division was titled "Don't Waste Your Life" by Irene Lee of Mount Carmel School. The second-place winner was titled "Listen to Me" by Mariah Deleon Guerrero of Marianas High School. The third-place winner and winner of the People's Choice Award was titled "Violence can be masked as love" by Angeline Faith Laxamana of Marianas High School.

In the Essay category, students were asked to address one of two prompts about teen dating violence. The prompt most chosen by the winners is "How common do you think violence or abuse is in relationships in the CNMI? What needs to be done to help youth and teens experiencing violence or abuse?" The other prompt asked students to describe how they think culture affects the way CNMI youth view healthy relationships and dating violence.

The first-place winner in the Essay category in the Middle School division was Victor Nash M. Santos of Mount Carmel School. Second place went to Lovelee B. Jingco of Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr. Sr. High School, while the third place went to Mya DLG Pangelinan of Mount Carmel School.

The first-place winner in the Essay category in the High School division was Jermaine Chloe Yalung of Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr. Sr. High School. The second-place winner was Fiona Marielle Bucalig of Mount Carmel School. The third-place winner was Angeline Faith Laxamana of Marianas High School.

In the Spoken Word category, the first-place winners won $300 cash prize, second place winners won $200, and third place winners won $100. The competition was judged by Mercilynn Palec, Jay Sanchez, and Malyssa Castro

The first-place winner in the Middle School division was titled "Toxic Love" by Gian Antonio of Francisco M. Sablan Middle School. The second-place winner was titled "Beyond Repair" by Daniel Dela Cruz of Dandan Middle School. The third-place winner was titled "Never Again" by Jenilyn Jacoba of Francisco M. Sablan Middle School.

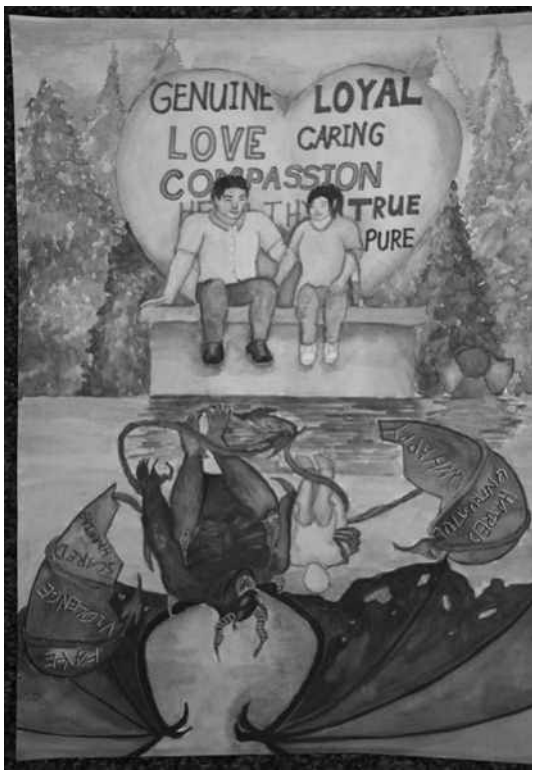
The first-place winner and winner of the People's Choice Award for the Spoken Word category in the High School division was titled "The Heart's Will" by Victoria Igitol Pangelinan of Kagman High School. The second-place winner was titled "It's Not Me" by Jill Anne Mallari of Mount Carmel School. The third-place winner was titled "Where Are You."

According to the NMCADSV, the "aim of the competition is to encourage youth to learn about teen dating violence and take part in raising awareness through creating original two-dimensional artwork, writing essays, and performing spoken word poetry that address themes related to teen dating violence and/or healthy relationships in young people."

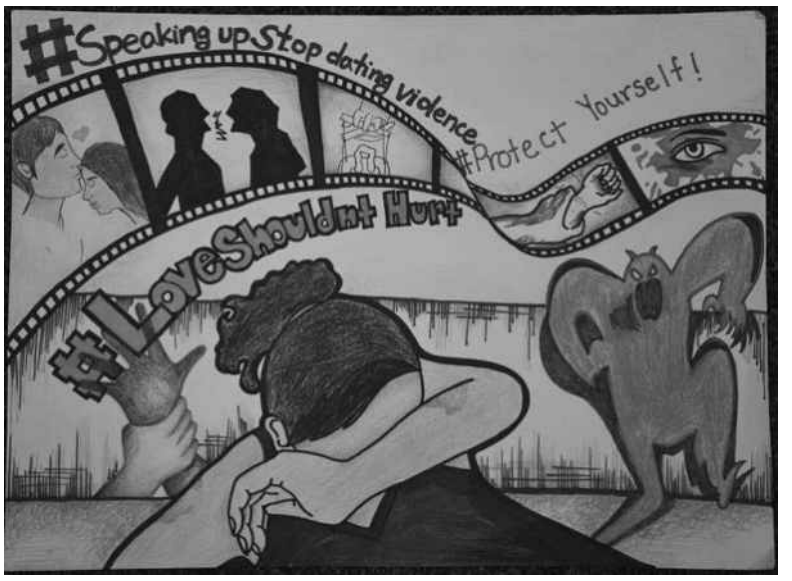
NMCADSV received "over 100 two-dimensional artworks, 21 essays, and 19 poems for the competition. While NMCADSV has hosted an annual spoken word competition, this year all 19 performances were filmed for the livestream for social distancing. Youth volunteers Yurihana Sasamoto and Shawnrey Gaviola emceed the event online, introducing each spoken word performance, providing information and resources on teen dating violence, and announcing all winners.

"We are very pleased with the level of student participation we got for the first Know Your Worth competition," said NMCADSV executive director Maisie B. Tenorio. "It was a great idea to add more ways for students to express themselves in addition to spoken word poetry."

If you or someone you know is experiencing violence or abuse, call 911 for emergency assistance. You can also call the Karidat Victim Hotline at (670) 234-5100, which is available 24/7 and confidential.

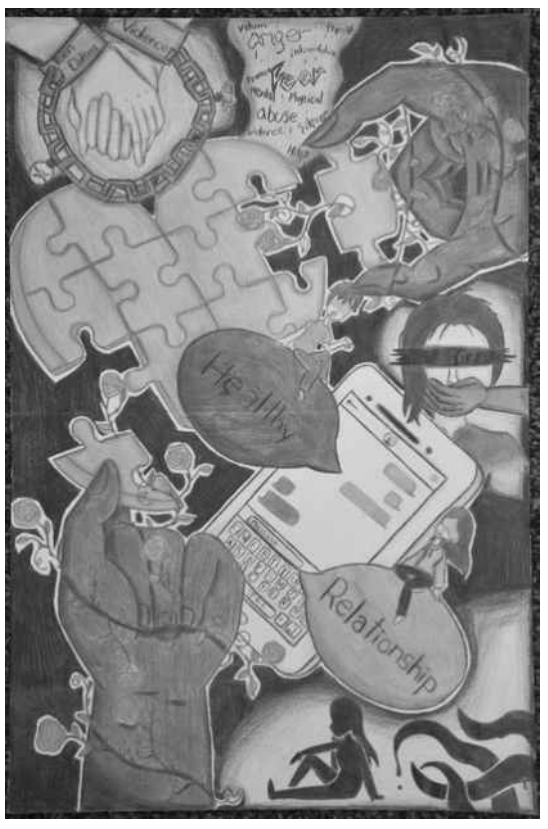


First - Gwanhun Son – Middle School



First - Irene Lee – High School

Second - Mariah Deleon Guerrero – High School



Third - Kyla Marie Diestro – Middle School

People's Choice Award - Sheryne Yang - Middle School

Second - Verica He – Middle School

Third and People's Choice Award - Angeline Faith Laxamana – High School

Samoa detects scores of COVID cases within days of outbreak

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—Samoa has reported scores of new COVID-19 cases each day since detecting its first case of community transmission last week.

The South Pacific island nation of 200,000 people has been in lockdown since Saturday as it deals with its first outbreak of the pandemic.

The outbreak was discovered when a woman who was about to travel tested positive for the virus last Thursday and indicates the virus likely had been spreading undetected for days or even weeks.

Samoa reported another 95 new cases in 24 hours to Saturday and another 85 on Sunday.

Only 15 of the 196 active cases were imported from overseas, according to the the latest government statement available Monday. More than 2,200 tests have been done since Friday, the statement said.

Samoa and several neighboring Pacific island nations were among the last places in the world to avoid virus outbreaks. But the more transmissible omicron variant has changed the equation, and one by one the island nations have been succumbing to COVID-19.

Since the start of the year, Kiribati, Tonga, the Solomon Islands, the Cook Islands and American Samoa have all experienced their first big outbreaks.

All Samoan schools are closed, public gatherings are banned, and all stores and other services are shut down, except those considered essential.

The lockdown is initially scheduled to last until Tuesday but many expect it will be extended.

About 65% of all Samoans have had at least two doses of a coronavirus vaccine, according to Our World in Data.

Samoa has had previous virus scares and lockdowns after returning plane passengers tested positive while isolating, but had managed to avoid any community outbreaks until now.

Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and Nauru are among the few remaining Pacific island nations to have avoided omicron outbreaks.

Cannabis enforcement training begins for CNMI law enforcers

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After over a year since the recreational and medicinal use of cannabis was made legal in the CNMI, the CNMI Cannabis Commission, in collaboration with the Office of the Attorney General Criminal Division, held a two-day enforcement training to clarify the dos and don'ts for legal cannabis users.

Cannabis commission managing director Monique Sablan said this series of trainings is important because for there had been a gray area in terms of who's enforcing what when it comes to marijuana rules and regulations

"The relationship between the commission and law enforcement agencies, it's been a little bit of a gray area. A lot of us were not sure at one point of what was the relationship like who's enforcing what, who's going to enforce the businesses, who's enforcing marijuana out in the community. Now, this training is to establish our relationship and what our goals are for this industry," Sablan said

The first two training sessions, which were conducted last Thursday and Friday at the Northern Marianas College, were geared for Department of Public Safety officers and their supervisors.

"We're starting off first with DPS, our front-liners, and their supervisors. What we're trying to do is to give them the information not only through the commission, but through legal advice, with Chief Prosecutor Chester Hinds," she said.

KIMBERLY ESMORES

CNMI Cannabis Commission managing director Monique Sablan, fifth from right, and Office of the Attorney General Criminal Division Chief Prosecutor Chester Hinds, seated left, pose with Department of Public Safety officers and their supervisors after two training sessions at the Northern Marianas College last week.

With DPS officers having received this training, the commission now aims to hold similar trainings for Customs and Border Patrol, Department of Corrections, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, and possibly even the Alcoholic Beverage and Tobacco Control Bureau.

"Next month, we're actually going to focus more on Customs. There's a lot of different questions for Customs too, a lot of the information within the law that we want to break down for them in regards to what their duties are. Then we're going to move on to DOC and hopefully DFEMS as well, then finally smaller law enforcement agencies such as ABTC because they also play a part in enforcement in stores. We want to be able to encompass all of that. So hopefully, within the next few months, we're also going to be planning our trip in May, hopefully to Tinian and Rota," she said.

"We're trying to do all of this within the span of maybe two to three months. The beauty of having these trainings where we only have about 20 participants from a specific division is really helpful because they have their own questions in relation to their jobs and we're able to answer those questions. By doing this, we're not wasting anyone's time. We're getting down to the nitty gritty of what are they are supposed to do," Sablan added.

According to Hinds, OAG Criminal Division chief prosecutor, the hope is to establish a relationship between the commission and enforcement agencies like DPS so that everyone is aware of the line between right and wrong when it comes to this new industry.

"Having these agencies be on the same page is important because we want the marijuana industry in the community to flourish. We want it to flourish legally because if it's flourishing legally, that means it can contribute to the economy. Also, with due training and education means less work later, and less people getting in trouble over marijuana. Lastly, we want to focus on kids not smoking marijuana too. So that's why it's important that DPS understands where the line is," he said.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

02/22/2022

Notice for Public Comment

Reprogramming of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds

Program Year:	Program	Activity Name:	Subrecipient:	Approved Budget:	Proposed Reprogramming Amount:	Proposed Revised Project Budget:	Current IDIS Funded Amount:
PY 2020	CDBG	CNMI Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (DFEMS) Purchase of Personal, Protective, Equipment	CNMI Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services	$106,000.00	($106,00.00)	$0.00	$106,000.00
		Total Reprogrammed from Activities:		**$106,00.00**	**$106,00.00**		
NEW	CDBG	CNMI Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (DFEMS) Purchase of (2) Watercraft Rescue Units and (2) All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)	CNMI Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services	$0.00	$106,00.00	$106,000.00	$0.00
		Total Reprogrammed from Activities:			**$106,00.00**		

The new project is considered a Public Services project which is subject to a 15% cap of the CDBG grant estimated allocation of $970,416.00 and remains within the cap. Our agency through its Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) publishes a "Public Notice" on reprogramming of funds over $100,001.00. Therefore, comments from the general public should be submitted to NMHC Central office located in Garapan, Saipan, and in the Rota and Tinian Field Offices, on or before March 25, 2022 no later than 4:30 P.M. You may contact Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director or Ms. Tricia Tenorio, Planner at (670)234-6866/9447.

"NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency"

HONOR LIST

Saipan Community School
3rd Quarter Honor List

Principal's List 4.00
(No grade below a "A")
Claire Oh, 4th grade
Hiyori Okuma, 4th grade
Micaela Tenorio, 4th grade
Jose Sablan, 6th grade
Joshua Yoo, 7th grade
Lola Guerrero, 8th grade
Raina Park, 8th grade

"A" Honor Roll
3.50 to 3.99
(No grades below a "B")
Kielon Catching, 4th grade
Leo Samson Pangelinan, 4th grade
Vivian Chung, 5th grade
Patrick McDonald, 6th grade
Daniel Nae, 6th grade
Jihun Park, 6th grade
Emma Sablan, 6th grade
Annabella Tudela, 6th grade
Richard Zhao, 6th grade
Byul An, 7th grade
Hannah Chae, 7th grade
Morgan Finco, 7th grade
David Park, 7th grade
Jeong Bin Park, 7th grade
Joan Song, 7th grade
David Ye, 7th grade
Hilah Bacanai, 8th grade
Alfred Baek, 8th grade
Drei Camacho, 8th grade
Jie Huang, 8th grade
Abbie Kim, 8th grade
Andy Kim, 8th grade
Tae Seong Kim, 8th grade
Leighton Palacios, 8th grade
Sheryne Yang, 8th grade
Elijah Ye, 8th grade
Joanne Yoon, 8th grade

"B" Honor Roll
3.00 to 3.49
(No grades below a "C")
Alexander Diaz, 4th grade
Wilson Guo, 4th grade
Lily Lim, 4th grade
Ryan Macaranas, 4th grade
Jessiac Gao, 5th grade
Elijah Pangelinan, 5th grade
Maria Smith, 5th grade
Nicole Williams, 5th grade
Tony Xiao, 5th grade
Shito Yoshise, 5th grade
Ian Char, 6th grade
William Guo, 6th grade
Gabriela Bark, 7th grade
Sharon Zhang, 7th grade
Timothy Haynes, 8th grade

SMALL BUSINESS POP UP EVENT

Sheri Llagas of Cherryx Moon Co.'s stall shows off some of her products at the Cafe Mangosix small business pop up event last Saturday in Dan Dan. The event also showcased six other small businesses. LEIGH GASES

CNMI Soul's Ha'ane Isa Fejeran showcases her handmade reusable bag at the Cafe Mangosix small business pop up event last Saturday in Dan Dan.

Stitched by Suvanna's Suvanna Sablan and Sage Borja pose with their crocheted bandanas at the Cafe Mangosix small business pop up event last Saturday in Dan Dan. LEIGH GASES

Paopao's Jaki Fujihira poses with her perfume line at the Cafe Mangosix small business pop up event last Saturday in Dan Dan. LEIGH GASES

Bonitu Basalu's David Vinyard (co-owned with his wife, Lani Vinyard) poses at his stall showcasing some pieces of jewelry made from seashells, sea glass and spondylus. LEIGH GASES

Thrift with Tee's Trina Palacios and family pose at their stall at the Cafe Mangosix small business pop up event last Saturday in Dan Dan. LEIGH GASES

Shop Neni Girl Nails' Aysha Cabrera with her table of products at the Cafe Mangosix small business pop up event last Saturday in Dan Dan. LEIGH GASES

Customers check out the many items for sale at the Cafe Mangosix small business pop up event last Saturday in Dan Dan. LEIGH GASES

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXII, Issue No. 57

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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Today's war, and tomorrow's: Support for Ukraine is crucial, but a no-fly zone is still an unwise escalation

In arguing forcefully before Congress for NATO to institute a no-fly zone over Ukrainian airspace, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy did what any besieged head of state would do: He advocated for what he believes will safeguard his people. His dedication to his country's unyielding resistance to Russian aggression is admirable.

Yet President Joe Biden is not the president of Ukraine, and neither are the leaders of the NATO alliance, and they must make decisions that will best punish Putin and his forces without provoking a far wider and bloodier conflagration. Engaging in direct combat with the Russian military, likely sparking a hot war between nuclear-armed powers, from where we sit remains a too-risky proposition.

It is in America's interest for the Russian president's demented campaign to be countered and turned back, as it's clear that allowing him to act on his expansionist designs has only encouraged him, and will do the same to other strongmen with territorial ambitions. The best way forward now is to continue with the two-pronged strategy of providing support for Ukraine's army and territorial defenders, and punishing Putin at home.

Biden's announcement of more than $1 billion in security assistance to Ukraine might not be as flashy or cathartic as U.S. troops taking down the autocrat's warplanes, but it is crucial to preserving Ukraine's momentum. By all accounts, American anti-aircraft systems, anti-tank weapons and other advanced weapons have been vital in preventing the quick victory Putin had expected. With them, Ukrainian fighters can themselves combat Russian air power.

Continued sanctions and the cutting off of Russia from world markets and financial systems is a longer game, and while it's hard to see the nexus between that and the bombs falling on civilian buildings in Ukraine, the truth is that the economic measures are already weakening Russia's economy, and with it, Putin's ability to prolong an increasingly unpopular war.

Cooler allied heads might not keep Putin from battering Ukraine, but for now, they can box him in and head off a world war.

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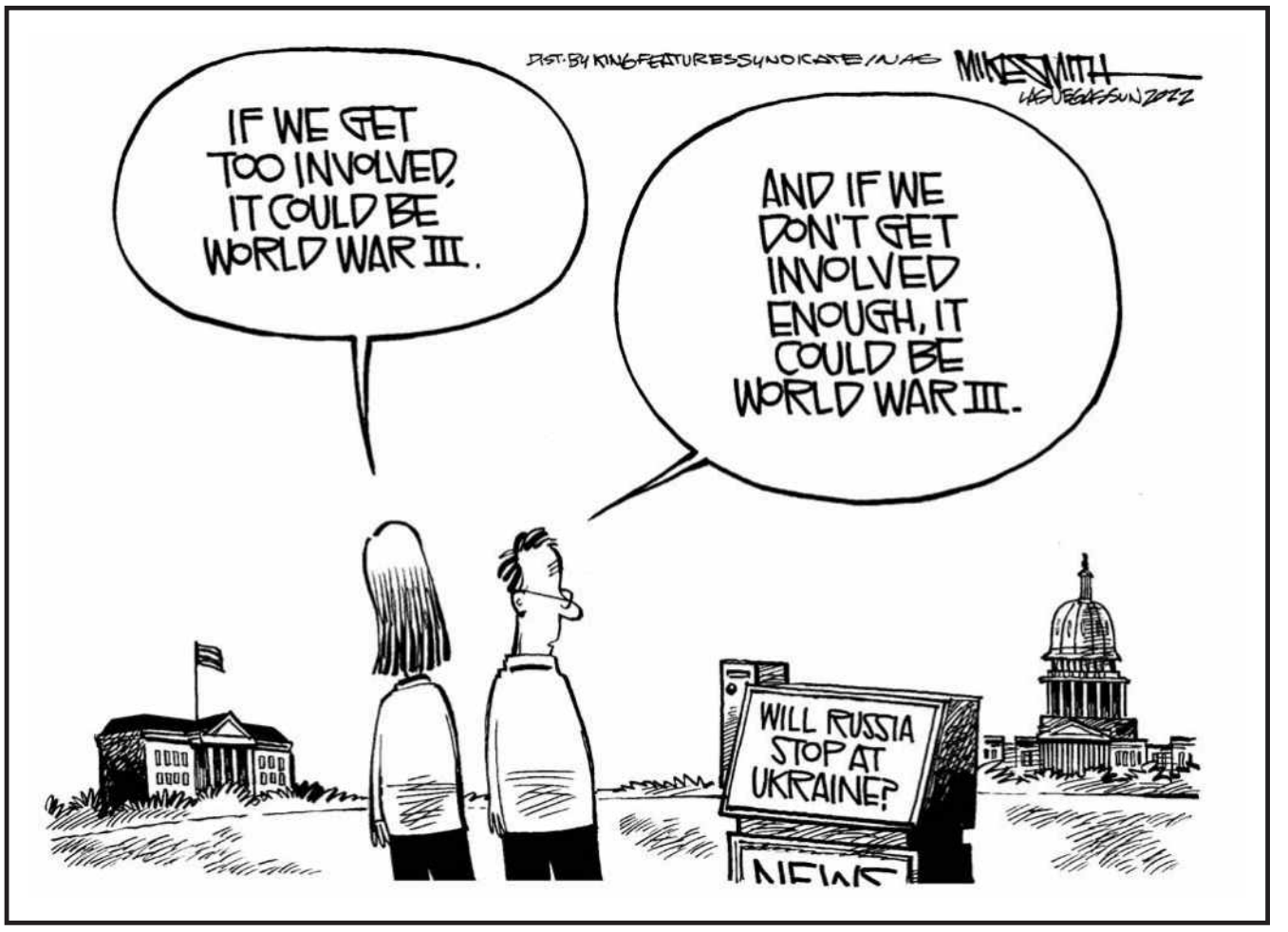
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MIKE SMITH
IF WE GET TOO INVOLVED, IT COULD BE WORLD WAR III.
AND IF WE DON'T GET INVOLVED ENOUGH, IT COULD BE WORLD WAR III.
WILL RUSSIA STOP AT UKRAINE?
NEWS

The obfuscation of war

By NICHOLAS GOLDBERG
Los Angeles Times

Nicholas Goldberg is an associate editor and op-ed columnist for the Los Angeles Times.

Russia ratcheted up its battle against truth and transparency by several notches when it passed a law earlier this month banning the words "war" and "invasion" to describe its behavior in Ukraine. The law sets prison sentences of up to 15 years for people who dare utter those words or spread other "fake news" about the conflict.

It's a throwback to the country's ugly totalitarian past and suggests Russian President Vladimir Putin is scared of his own people and worried about his grip on power.

But let's keep things in context. Although the United States and other democracies don't generally prosecute their citizens for speaking out candidly and honestly, there's nothing new about governments trying to control the language of war. In fact, the packaging and marketing of war through obfuscation, euphemism and even dishonesty is almost as old as war itself.

It is ludicrous that Russia insists its brutal behavior in Ukraine, which has already killed thousands of civilians and soldiers, is not a war or an invasion but merely a "special military operation," whatever that means. Yet for years the United States maintained that the Korean War was not a war. President Harry Truman referred to it as a "police action" and Congress said it was merely a "conflict." More than 2.5 million people died, including more than 30,000 American military personnel.

Governments don't like to acknowledge starting wars because wars, for obvious reasons, are not very popular. In 1949, in fact, the former U.S. Department of War was renamed the Department of Defense, even though most Americans knew, if they bothered to think about it, that the department's work did not just involve defense.

I'm not suggesting a moral equivalence between what the Russians are doing when they toss people in prison for telling the truth and what democracies do when they use misleading language. But the underlying objectives are similar.

Every Madison Avenue ad executive knows that when you name something, you set the terms of debate. If it's something as unpopular as war, it may serve your purposes to cloak it in jargon or acronyms, call it the opposite of what it is or make it sound clinical and less disturbing.

Call civilian deaths "collateral damage." Don't call a coup a coup; call it "regime change." Rebrand the war department.

This sort of misnaming goes back at least as far as the Romans, who expanded their empire through a process they called "pacification." (Much as the Russian newscasts last week called the Ukraine invasion "an operation to restore peace.")

The Nazis referred to the murder of Jews in gas chambers as "special treatment."

According to the late Berkeley linguist Geoffrey Nunberg, it was during the Crimean War in the mid-19th century that the more bloodless word "casualty" began to be used to refer to the maimed and dead.

The objective in each case was to sanitize or justify a gory and unpleasant business.

"Different linguistic frames can bias peoples' moral judgments," wrote a group of Canadian researchers last year, in one of many studies of the subject. They noted that substituting different verbs, adding more agreeable phrases, using euphemisms and adopting the passive voice can make morally offensive behaviors more palatable to people.

A week into the war in Ukraine, nearly 6 in 10 Russians supported it and only 23% opposed it, according to one independent poll. That's because propaganda and doublespeak, combined with near-total control of the media, are effective tools for winning hearts and minds.

We call this misuse of the language Orwellian because it was George Orwell, the British journalist, critic and novelist, who wrote so clearly about it in "1984" and elsewhere.

"Defenseless villages are bombarded from the air, the inhabitants driven out into the countryside, the cattle machine-gunned, the huts set on fire with incendiary bullets: this is called pacification," he wrote in his classic 1946 essay "Politics and the English Language. "... Such phraseology is needed if one wants to name things without calling up mental pictures of them."

During the George W. Bush administration, two egregious euphemisms stand out. The first is "extraordinary rendition" to refer to snatching terrorism suspects off the streets of foreign cities and sending them to so-called black sites in foreign countries. The second is the phrase "enhanced interrogation techniques" to refer to torture. (Andrew Sullivan argued in the Atlantic in 2007 that the latter phrase had roots in the Gestapo interrogation method known as "Verschärfte Vernehmung," which translates roughly as "sharpened questioning" or "intensified interrogation.")

And to one degree or another, news organizations followed the government's lead: The Times used the phrase "enhanced interrogation" for a while, although usually in quotes with an accom-

See WAR on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

It's never too late to speak up

By JERMAINE CHLOE YALUNG
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Editor's Note: The following essay won first place in the high school division of the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence 2022 Know Your Worth Essay Competition. It sought to answer the question: How common do you think violence or abuse is in relationships in the CNMI? Describe what you think needs to be done to help youth and teens experiencing violence or abuse in a relationship.

Humans have always craved affection. It's what allows us to connect with the people around us—the feeling of love and being loved back. Everyone wants to love and be loved. However, in a world where countless films, articles, and even social media capture love to be a picture-perfect story, the pressure has never been greater for the youth to get into a relationship, but some of them get lost in that illusion and end up hurting more than getting the love they crave. Violence and abuse occur everywhere and takes up all forms—emotional, verbal, and physical—all of which leaves a detrimental effect on the victim's life, if not ultimately taking it away. Violence and abuse in relationships is prevalent in the CNMI, but despite this, very few victims have had the courage to speak up and take action against their aggressors. This has made it hard to pinpoint the exact number of domestic violence cases and especially harder to provide help for the victims of these horrendous crimes.

Winning essays in the NMCADSV Know Your Worth Essay Competition. It sought to answer the question: How common do you think violence or abuse is in relationships in the CNMI? Describe what you think needs to be done to help youth and teens experiencing violence or abuse in a relationship.

As a community, we want to safeguard our people, including our youth. One of the best ways we can protect them and prevent violence and abuse from happening is through shedding light and raising awareness on the matter. Authorities such as the PSS, DYS, and NMCADSV should prioritize implementing seminars and classes that raise awareness on violence and abuse, focusing on key topics like recognizing the signs of abuse and knowing their resources when experiencing or witnessing abuse. Through these seminars, the youth becomes aware of this occurrence and what they can do to help not only themselves but others as well.

Along with preventive measures, authorities must also strengthen their services for abuse victims by implementing strategies that make seeking help more accessible. Set up help desks in schools and communities, provide additional phone lines, integrate programs that help youth express their problems more comfortably. We must also focus on delivering effective support and care for victims who reach out, provide psychological support for the victims, and ensure their safety and security. Through these programs, we give victims of domestic violence an avenue to seek refuge and gain back the life and happiness they deserve.

It is not too late to take action. We must act efficiently and treat these cases with the same amount of priority we do with our health as domestic violence impacts our emotional, mental, and physical state after all. At the end of the day, everyone deserves to experience love—the kind of love where they are safe and supported and never have to be afraid of saying the wrong thing. It is up to us to educate our youth on healthy relationships as ensuring their safety starts with us giving them a safe space.

Jermaine Chloe Yalung is a student of Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr./Sr. High School on Rota.

How culture affects the youth's view of healthy relationships

By FIONA MARIELLE BUCALIG
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Editor's Note: The following essay won second place in the high school division of the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence 2022 Know Your Worth Essay Competition. The author seeks to describe how she thinks culture affects the way the CNMI youth view healthy relationships and dating violence.

The CNMI comprises cultures such as Chamorro, Carolinian, Korean, Filipino, and much more. From there may come different outlooks concerning general matters with relationships. Adolescents are influenced by the cultural ideals of individuals who are most accessible to them, such as close family. When young people become unaware of pitfalls in a relationship, they can become victims of dating violence and unhealthy relationship dynamics. Though not always intentional, cultural viewpoints may leave youth to discover relationships without knowing the characteristics of healthy relations. When young people don't have these outlets and environments to have open and accepting discussions about relationships, they are likely to be affected by unhealthy relationships and dating violence.

Firstly, the initial values instilled in a person come from the teachings derived from a culture's values. So, for example, it may be from pushing the importance of religion within one's own life or viewed as having more weight or power within a family. And when it comes to relationships, the influences that one's culture may have can lead to both positive and negative experiences. So while one can have positive experiences that help one mature and grow more, there can be negative experiences that one may have due to their culture. For example, when culture is influenced by religion, one can experience a lack of self-value or respect due to their sexuality, leading to pitfalls such as age gaps and dating violence.

Secondly, cultural factors play a significant role in a person's values. For some cultures, there are no expectations; others instill presumptions that form their approach to relationships. The different ideas, speed, attitude, and even financial investment, initiate the approach, which may come across different cultures.

When comparing a 13-year-old female to a male, some cultures believe that a female would be too young to experience any relationship but allow the male to engage in a relationship. This double standard leaves many female adolescents unaware of how a relationship should function. Some adolescents' lack of knowledge often leads to toxic relationship patterns and behaviors. Adolescents oblivious to healthy and unhealthy relationships can progress further to falling victim to both verbal and physical abuse. In addition, some cultures' attitudes toward youth lead to unacceptable qualities and toxic relationships.

In my experiences of having a relationship while mindful of the dating precepts of my family's culture, it was hard to navigate relationships. I always felt like I was dealing with them on my own. My parents' failure to advise and instill healthy behaviors and expectations has led me to experience immense heartache. Psychological effects would have been more avoidable with open-minded discussions about relationships.

To conclude, culture and the values derived and further instilled in a person shape their understanding of how one should conduct oneself regarding relationships. When it comes to its effect on the youth regarding teen dating, the influences of one's culture, lack of guidance/role models will ultimately lead to the expense of the adolescent.

Fiona Marielle Bucalig is a student of Mount Carmel School.

WAR

From Page 8

panying phrase such as "which some people consider torture." Some other newspapers adopted the administration's language or used their own euphemisms, referring to waterboarding, sleep deprivation and slamming suspects against walls as "severe tactics" or "rough treatment."

So far, President Joe Biden seems to be more straightforward than many of his predecessors, despite his use of at least one hackneyed, misleading Cold War-era anachronism: "the free world." Then again, the U.S. didn't start the war in Ukraine and is not directly engaged in the fighting, so he has less to obfuscate.

The problem with spinning and manipulating the language of war is that when you make harmful acts sound harmless it becomes that much more likely that they will continue.

If war is not hell but is sanitized, innocuous and bureaucratized, then why not engage in it more often? If my country is not an aggressor behaving brutally but is engaged in pacification or enhanced interrogation or in a "special military operation," why shouldn't I support it?

Honesty is rare when governments go to war. Journalists, scholars and citizens on all sides must listen hard to separate facts from spin if they hope to understand the realities and know when they're being manipulated. Then they must call it to the attention of others—if they can do so without being imprisoned.

'No one should ever resort to violence'

By ANGELINE FAITH LAXAMANA
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Editor's Note: The following essay won third place in the high school division of the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence 2022 Know Your Worth Essay Competition.

Any type of violence or abuse in relationships is unpleasant and unfavorable in every way. I highly believe that these types of violence happen very often and are sometimes seen as common in the CNMI. Some of the types of abuse portrayed in the CNMI include sexual abuse, emotional and verbal abuse, as well as physical abuse. It's important to raise awareness and educate others about being safe, and to lead them into greater choices to enter in a healthier relationship.

"Isn't it easier for them to leave? So they won't be hurt anymore?" Leaving a very abusive relationship can seem easy from the outside, but is very difficult and not that simple in reality. There could be many factors why victims don't leave their abusers: being controlled, feeling like there's still hope to save the relationship, fear of being alone forever, isolation from friends and family, threatened. Sometimes people would even think that it's their fault for it happening to them in the first place. No matter who you are, or what situation you are in, any type of abuse or violence is not your fault, and you are not to blame for being hurt.

I believe that there are a few things that should be done to help the youth and teens that are experiencing violence right now. Some involve domestic abuse shelters (to grant victims a place to stay if they have nowhere else to go), convenient free phones to use (access to call for help without the abuser knowing who they called), and even code/safewords (can be placed into women's and men's bathroom, e.g., "Do you have any warm cookies for sale?"). With at least some of these solutions, I feel like there is a chance of saving people from toxic relationships.

To grant awareness, there should be advertisements or posters stuck around, and recalling to watch out for red flags, what abuse can look like, and how to handle things. Out of many things, it's important to establish a healthy relationship once getting into one. A few topics that could be talked about beforehand can include boundaries, honesty, communication, and set rules. With these kinds of topics, it helps to understand your partner or soon-to-be significant other about how they feel and what they might be like when you two are together.

No one should ever resort to violence.

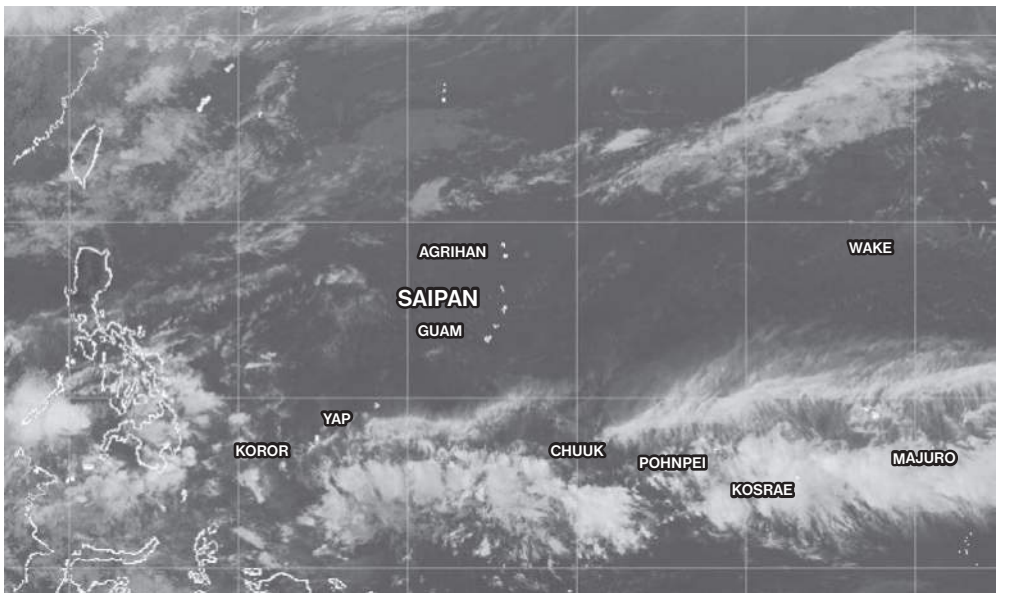
Angeline Faith Laxamana is a student of Marianas High School.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph	Mostly cloudy. Scattered showers.	Mostly cloudy. Scattered showers.
87º 76º	87º 76º	87º 76º	85º 76º	85º 76º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:22 AM, MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2022

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Partly cloudy skies and moderate to fresh trade winds are seen across the Marianas this morning. Radar and satellite show a few showers moving through the coastal waters. The buoys are indicating seas around 6 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloud	30 / 25 °F
Palau	Partly Cloud	30 / 26 °F
Yap	Partly Cloud	30 / 26 °F
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	29 / 26 °F
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	29 / 26 °F
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	29 / 26 °F
Majuro	Scattered Thunderstorms	29 / 27 °F

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	06:20 AM	18:28 PM
Wednesday	06:19 AM	18:28 PM
Thursday	06:18 AM	18:28 PM
Friday	06:17 AM	18:28 PM
Saturday	06:17 AM	18:28 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Tuesday	-	09:03 PM	22:14 PM
Wednesday	-	09:52 PM	23:16 PM
Thursday	-	10:46 PM	-
Friday	00:20	11:45 PM	-
Saturday	01:23	12:47 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Thunderstorms	23 / 18 °F
Beijing	PM Showers	11 / 1 °F
Hong Kong	PM Thunderstorms	26 / 18 °F
Honolulu	Mostly Cloud	28 / 22 °F
London	Sunny	19 / 5 °F
Los Angeles	Sunny	28 / 15 °F
Manila	Partly Cloud	35 / 26 °F
Melbourne	PM Light Rain	27 / 16 °F
Miami	Mostly Sunny	25 / 22 °F
New York	Partly Cloudy	17 / 8 °F
Osaka	Rain	14 /7°F
Paris	Sunny	18 / 6 °F
Busan	Mostly Cloudy/Wind	12 / 7 °F
Rome	Sunny	16 / 3 °F
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	26 / 17 °F
San Francisco	Sunny	21 / 10 °F
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	14 / 2 °F
Tokyo	Rain	7 / 3 °F
Washington, DC	Sartly Cloudy	20 / 9 °F

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
04:17 AM	Low Tide	0.72
09:52 AM	High Tide	1.86
4:52 PM	Low Tide	0.01
11:23 PM	High Tide	1.73

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

■ Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.

■ Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.

■ Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.

■ Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.

■ Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.

■ Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html

■ Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

■ Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

■ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

■ Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:

• Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.

• Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

• Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

• Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 14, 2022

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	7:20am	8:05am	2, 4, 6
UA117	9:50am	10:35am	1, 3, 5, 7

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	6:30am	8:20am	1, 3, 5
UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	7:20am	9:50pm	2, 4, 6 via Guam
UA117/183	9:50am	9:50pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via Guam

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

7C3406	3:10PM	6:55PM	Every 4 days (Jan 29-Mar 30)
TW9308	3:30PM	7:20PM	4, 7
OZ6243	4:00PM	7:40PM	3, 6

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

BX621	3:10PM	6:30PM	7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA116	5:30am	6:16am	2, 4, 6
UA116	8:00am	8:46am	7
UA174	8:00am	8:46am	1, 3, 5

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:15pm	4:00am+1	2, 4, 7
UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	2, 5
UA184	10:55pm	4:45am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/116	10:40pm	6:16am+1	5 via Guam
UA184/174	10:40pm	8:46am+1	2 via Guam
UA184/116	10:55pm	6:16am+1	1, 3 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55pm	8:46am+1	4, 7 via Guam
UA184/116	10:55pm	8:46am+1	6 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3405	8:30AM	2:10PM	Every 4 days (Jan 29-Mar 30)
TW9307	9:00AM	Q2:30PM	4, 7
OZ6233	9:00AM	2:30PM	3, 6

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

BX622	8:00AM	1:10PM	7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Daily
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Daily
1303	1:30PM	2:00PM	Tues/Wed/ Thurs/Fri
1304	3:30PM	4:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Daily
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Daily
3103	1:30PM	3:00PM	Tues/Wed/ Thurs/Fri
3104	4:30PM	5:00PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Daily
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Daily
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business

Ukraine war is backdrop in US push for hypersonic weapons

PORTLAND, Maine (AP)—Lagging behind Russia in developing hypersonic weapons, the U.S. Navy is rushing to field its first, with installation on a warship starting as soon as late next year.

The United States is in a race with Russia and China to develop these weapons, which travel at speeds akin to ballistic missiles but are difficult to shoot down because of their maneuverability.

The Russian military says it already deployed hypersonic missiles, claiming on both Saturday and Sunday to have deployed them against targets in Ukraine marking the weapon's first use in combat. The Pentagon couldn't confirm a hypersonic weapon was used in the attacks.

The American military is accelerating development to catch up.

The U.S. weapon would launch like a ballistic missile and would release a hypersonic glide vehicle that would reach speeds seven to eight times faster than the speed of sound before hitting the target.

In Maine, General Dynamics subsidiary Bath Iron Works has begun engineering and design work on changes necessary to install the weapon system on three Zumwalt-class destroyers.

AP
This handout photo provided by the U.S. Navy shows a common hypersonic glide body (C-HGB) launching from the Pacific Missile Range Facility, in Kauai, Hawaii, March 19, 2020, during a Department of Defense flight experiment.

The work would begin at a yet-to-be-named shipyard sometime in fiscal year that begins in October 2023, the Navy said.

Hypersonic weapons are defined as anything traveling beyond Mach 5, or five times faster than the speed of sound. That's about 3,800 mph (6,100 kph). Intercontinental ballistic missiles far exceed that threshold but travel in a predictable path, making it possible to intercept them.

The new weapons are maneuverable.

Existing missile defense systems, including the Navy's Aegis system, would have trouble intercepting such objects because maneuverability makes their movement unpredictable and speed leaves little time to react.

Russia says it has ballistic missiles that can deploy hypersonic glide vehicles as well as a hypersonic cruise missile.

The U.S. is "straining just to catch up" because it failed to invest in the new technology, with only a fraction of the 10,000 people who were working on the program in the 1980s, said U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper, a Tennessee Democrat who's chair of a subcommittee that monitors the program.

"If we want to pursue parity, we will need to back this effort with more money, time, and talent than we are now," he said.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine serves as a backdrop as the Pentagon releases its budget proposal that lays out its goals for hypersonics and other weapon systems later this month.

The three stealthy Zumwalt-class destroyers to be equipped with the new weapons have plenty of space to accommodate them—thanks to a design failure that works to the Navy's advantage in this instance.

The ships were built around a gun system that was supposed to use GPS-guided, rocket-boosted projectiles to pound targets 90 miles (145 kilometers) away. But those projectiles proved to be too expensive, and the Navy canceled the system, leaving each of the ships with a useless loading system and a pair of 155-mm guns hidden in angular turrets.

The retrofit of all three ships will likely cost more than $1 billion but will give a new capability to the tech-laden, electric-drive ships that already cost the Navy $23.5 billion to design and build, said Bryan Clark, a defense analyst at the Hudson Institute.

"The engineering is not that hard. It'll just take time and money to make it happen," Clark said.

The Navy intends to field the weapons on the destroyers in the 2025 fiscal year and on Virginia-class nuclear-powered attack submarines in the 2028 fiscal year, the Navy said.

The destroyers would be based in the Pacific Ocean, where they would be a deterrent to China, should it become emboldened by Russia's attack on Ukraine and consider attacking Taiwan, Clark said.

The U.S. focus on hypersonic weapons represents a pivot after hesitating in the past because of technological hurdles. Adversaries, meanwhile, continued research and development.

Russia fired off a salvo of Zircon hypersonic cruise missiles in late December, heralding the completion of weapon testing.

But Russia may be exaggerating the capability of such super weapons to compensate for weakness in other areas, said Loren Thompson, a defense analyst at the Lexington Institute.

For the time being, Russia doesn't have many of the weapons, and it's unclear how effective they are, he said.

Disney closes Shanghai park as virus rises, Shenzhen reopens

BEIJING (AP)—Disney Co. closed its Shanghai theme park Monday as Chinese authorities tried to control the city's biggest coronavirus flareup in two years, while the southern business center of Shenzhen allowed shops and offices to reopen after a weeklong closure.

Meanwhile, Changchun and Jilin in the northeast began another round of citywide virus testing following a surge in infections. Jilin tightened anti-disease curbs, ordering its 2 million residents to stay home.

China's case numbers in its latest infection wave are low compared with other major countries, but authorities are enforcing a "zero tolerance" strategy that has suspended access to some major cities.

The government reported 2,027 new cases in the 24 hours through midnight Sunday, up from the previous day's 1,737. That included 1,542 cases in Jilin province, where Changchun and Jilin are located.

The government of Shanghai, China's most populous city with 24 million people, has avoided a citywide shutdown of businesses and public facilities but has appealed to the public to stay home if possible. Bus service into the city has been suspended and visitors are required to show a negative virus test.

Disney said Shanghai Disneyland, Disneytown and Wishing Star Park would be closed until further notice.

On Monday, Shanghai reported 24 new cases. The city earlier suspended access to two residential areas and carried out mass testing at dozens of others.

The government of Shenzhen, a finance and technology center that abuts Hong Kong, announced businesses and government offices were allowed to reopen Monday while authorities took steps to try to prevent a resurgence of virus cases.

The city of 17.5 million shut down all businesses except those that supply food and other necessities, as well as bus and subway service, last week and told the public to stay home following a spike in cases.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Canadian Pacific rail work stoppage could hit US agriculture

DETROIT (AP)—Canadian Teamsters and CP Rail blamed each other for a work stoppage Sunday that brought trains to a halt across Canada and interrupted fertilizer and other shipments to and from the U.S. More than 3,000 Canadian Pacific Rail conductors, engineers, train and yard workers represented by the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference are off the job after both sides couldn't reach a deal by a midnight deadline. Both sides say they are still talking with federal mediators. Canadian Pacific covers much of the U.S. Midwest and is a large shipper of potash and fertilizer for agriculture. It also carries grain from the U.S. to its northern neighbor for domestic use and exports. The railroad serves the Dakotas, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, Missouri and other states, according to a map on its investor website. CP also operates in New England and upstate New York, spokesman Patrick Waldron said.

Steelworkers poised to strike at Chevron California refinery

RICHMOND, California (AP)—More than 500 workers at a Chevron Corp. refinery in the San Francisco Bay area have told the company they will go on strike at 12:01 a.m. Monday. Members of United Steelworkers Local 5 voted down the company's most recent contract offer and gave notice of intent to go on strike, the union said in a statement Sunday. The statement says Chevron refused to return to the bargaining table. Messages were left Sunday seeking comment from Chevron. If the strike shuts down the Richmond, California, refinery, it could crimp gasoline supplies in the state, which has the highest regular gas price in the nation at $5.847 per gallon, according to AAA. The union said in its statement that it reached a pattern agreement with the oil industry Feb. 25 on wages and working conditions. But about 200 bargaining units also have to agree on local issues before contracts can be approved.

Japan to invest $42B in India to strengthen economic ties

NEW DELHI (AP)—Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Saturday said his country will invest $42 billion in India over the next five years in a deal that is expected to boost bilateral trade. Kishida met his counterpart, Narendra Modi, in New Delhi during his maiden visit to India since assuming office. The two leaders held talks ranging from economy to security cooperation. In a televised press statement, Kishida said the investment plan will bring huge benefits for several industries, from the development of urban infrastructure to green energy. Kishida also said the two sides reaffirmed Japan and India's commitment to strengthen security ties across the Indo-Pacific region and held discussions over the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. "We discussed the situation in Ukraine. (The) Russian attack is a serious matter as it has shaken international norms," he said.

Nation

‘Do the right thing’: How US, allies united to punish Putin

WASHINGTON (AP)—Just days before Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24, President Joe Biden quietly dispatched a team to European Union headquarters in Belgium.

These were not spy chiefs or generals, but experts in reading fine print and tracking the flow of money, computer chips and other goods around the world. Their mandate: inflict maximum pain on Russian President Vladimir Putin, making it harder, if not impossible, for him to fund a prolonged war in Ukraine and denying him access to technologies at the core of modern warfare.

There were intense meetings in February in Brussels, Paris, London and Berlin, often running six hours at a time as the allies tried to craft the details of a historic economic blockade, according to Biden administration officials. Some of the exports the U.S. wanted to ban were met with reluctance by the Europeans, who would essentially be telling their own companies to forgo several billion dollars in annual revenues from Russia.

AP

U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo speaks during an address at Brown University, March 15, 2022, in Providence, R.I.

When there was a deadlock, U.S. negotiators would put Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo on the phone.

“You can say ‘no’ now, but when the body bags are coming out of Ukraine, you’re not going to want to be a holdout,” Raimondo said she told allied counterparts. “Do the right thing.”

Everyone signed on—and before the invasion.

Raimondo said what ultimately drove the agreement and the fast timeline was the threat of Putin’s imminent attack on Ukraine.

“We all got religion fast that it was time to band together and stick together,” she said. “If you cause enough pain, isolate Putin, it will bring this war to an end.”

The wealthiest nations in the world—outside of China—are directly confronting Putin on their preferred terms. They have imposed sanctions in which their strengths intersect with Russia’s vulnerabilities. Russia is reliant on the U.S., the EU, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan for cutting-edge technologies and investment, so the allies decided to cut Moscow off.

It’s a strategic play designed to trap Putin in a downward spiral, as foreign investors pull out their money in response to the atrocities. It’s also a remarkable show of unity that could be tested in the coming weeks by the allies’ own dependence on fossil fuels.

A group of economists estimated Thursday that EU countries have transferred more than 13.3 billion euros ($14.7 billion) to Russia for oil, natural gas and coal since the war began, essentially funding Putin’s war machine.

White House: Biden to visit Poland on Europe trip this week

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden has added a stop in Poland to his trip this week to Europe for urgent talks with NATO and European allies, as Russian forces concentrate their fire upon cities and trapped civilians in a nearly month-old invasion of Ukraine.

Biden will first travel to Brussels and then to Poland on Friday to meet with leaders there, press secretary Jen Psaki said in a statement Sunday night.

Poland is a crucial ally in the Ukraine crisis. It is hosting thousands of American troops and is taking in more people fleeing the war in Ukraine—more than 2 million—than any other nation in the midst of the largest European refugee crisis in decades.

Biden

Biden will head to Warsaw for a bilateral meeting with President Andrzej Duda. Biden will discuss how the U.S., along with its allies and partners, is responding to “the humanitarian and human rights crisis that Russia’s unjustified and unprovoked war on Ukraine has created,” Psaki said.

On Monday ahead of his trip, Biden will discuss the war with European leaders. President Emmanuel Macron of France, Chancellor Olaf Scholz of Germany, Prime Minister Mario Draghi of Italy and Prime Minister Boris Johnson of the United Kingdom are expected to take part, the White House said Sunday.

White House officials have said Biden has no plans to travel to Ukraine. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, while in Poland this month, briefly crossed into neighboring Ukraine in a show of solidarity alongside that country’s foreign minister, Dmytro Kuleba. Poland has been one of the most vocal countries in asking fellow NATO members to consider getting more involved to rein in the bloodshed.

Time to retool census? Some think so after minorities missed

By MIKE SCHNEIDER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Is it time to rethink the census and other surveys that measure changes in the U.S. population?

Policymakers and demographers have been asking that question since results released by the U.S. Census Bureau this month showed Black, Hispanic, American Indian and other minority residents were undercounted at greater rates in 2020 than in the previous decade.

On the top of that, results from a version of its most comprehensive survey that compares year-to-year changes in U.S. life had to be mostly scrapped because disruptions caused by the pandemic produced fewer responses in 2020.

“The current model of coming up with a master address list, mailing everybody an invitation—like you’re inviting people to a party and hoping they respond, and if not, you’re going to track them down—I think it’s an obsolete system,” said Arturo Vargas, CEO of NALEO Educational Fund, a nonpartisan nonprofit that supports Latino political engagement.

The undercounts in the 2020 census were blamed on the pandemic, natural disasters and political interference from the Trump administration, but undercounts of racial and ethnic minorities are nothing new to the census; they’ve been persistent for decades.

ACROSS THE NATION

4 wounded in shooting in Austin, Texas; suspect in custody

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—Four people were shot and wounded in downtown Austin, Texas, early Sunday as the city hosts the annual South by Southwest festival, police said. The Austin Police Department told people to avoid the area at around 2:50 a.m., warning via Twitter that the gunman was still at large. However, police tweeted that a suspect was in custody shortly before 5 a.m. Police and the Austin-Travis County EMS said the victims’ injures were not life-threatening, and all four had been taken to the hospital. The shooting took place in an area with several bars near where some SXSW festival events are held. The coronavirus pandemic forced the festival to go virtual the last two years.

Firefighter dies as wildfires continue in southwest Oklahoma

LAWTON, Okla. (AP)—A firefighter has died in one of several wildfires that broke out Sunday in a county in southwestern Oklahoma, authorities said. The name of the firefighter who died in the wildfire in Comanche County was not immediately released. Lawton, the county seat, is located about 90 miles (144.84 kilometers) southwest of Oklahoma City. Amy Hawkins, the spokeswoman for Comanche County/Lawton Emergency Management, said that as of late Sunday afternoon, there were two major wildfires still burning in the county and some evacuations had been ordered. “It’s pretty much been all hands on deck all day,” Hawkins said. She said the wildfire in which the firefighter died had been contained by late Sunday afternoon and was considered out. She said because a firefighter died, the state fire marshal would be investigating that fire.

SC deputies shoot and kill man, saying he fought officers

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP)—A South Carolina sheriff is defending the fatal shooting of a Black man who advanced on officers with a wooden stake, saying deputies can’t be expected to sacrifice their lives in dangerous situations. The remarks by Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott came Sunday amid an outcry over the Saturday shooting of Irvin D. Moorer Charley. The 34-year-old Moorer Charley was shot and killed in Columbia after deputies responded to a call about domestic violence. “We can’t expect these deputies to go out here and be killed,” Lott told reporters. “They have to protect themselves. And that’s what this deputy did yesterday. He protected himself. He went home to his family last night. Unfortunately Mr. Charley didn’t. That’s a decision that he made.” Critics say Moorer Charley was having a mental health crisis and that deputies were wrong to shoot him.

Black store owner reports robbery, gets punched by officer

DECATUR, Ala. (AP)—An Alabama liquor store owner has sued after a police officer responding to a robbery call at his store punched him in the face and broke his jaw in March 2020. The Decatur Daily reports that Kevin Penn sued the city of Decatur and police officer Justin Rippen on March 11 in federal court. Penn is Black and Rippen is white. The suit alleges the incident is an example of systematic use of “excessive force” by the Decatur Police Department that the city often ignores. The lawsuit alleges Penn’s constitutional rights were violated by illegal seizure, false arrest and excessive force, seeking money damages. City Attorney Herman Marks said Thursday his department hasn’t yet received the lawsuit and declined comment. Decatur Mayor Tab Bowling said he regrets a lawsuit has been filed but referred questions to Marks.

4 teens shot, 1 killed, in gunfire at Houston birthday party

HOUSTON (AP) — A 17-year-old boy was killed and three other teens were wounded early Sunday when a fight broke out in a Houston parking lot during a birthday party and multiple people opened fire, authorities said. Two 17-year-old boys and a 14-year-old girl were wounded, the Harris County Sheriff’s Office said. No suspects have yet been identified by investigators and it’s not known what caused the fight, the office said. Authorities said one of the 17-year-old boys was hospitalized in critical condition while the other was released with minor injuries. The 14-year-old girl was treated at a hospital for injuries that weren’t life threatening. A birthday party for a 16-year-old girl was taking place at a studio when the fight broke between several people in the parking lot, the sheriff’s department said.

Asia

N. Korea fires artillery into sea days after missile launch

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea fired suspected artillery pieces into the sea on Sunday, South Korea's military said, days after the North's latest missile launch ended in failure amid the country's recent burst of weapons testing activity.

There is speculation that North Korea could soon try to launch its developmental longest-range ballistic missile to bolster its arsenal and dial up pressure on the United States to wrest concessions as negotiations remain stalled. South Korea's military suggested North Korea's midair missile explosion last Wednesday involved parts of the Hwasong-17 missile, its biggest weapon.

On Sunday, South Korea's Defense Ministry said it detected firings likely from multiple rocket launch systems off North Korea's west coast. The ministry said the military closely monitors North Korean moves and maintains its readiness.

South Korea's presidential office said in a separate statement it held an emergency national security council meeting to discuss what it called the North's "short-range projectile launches."

Council members worked to analyze details of the firings in close coordination with the United States, it said. The statement added that South Korea will use its enhanced military capability and its alliance with the U.S. to prevent a security vacuum from occurring during a power transition period in Seoul.

President Moon Jae-in's single five-year term ends in May and he will be replaced by a new conservative government led by Yoon Suk Yeol. A former top prosecutor, Yoon has vowed to boost Seoul's military alliance with Washington and win a stronger U.S. security commitment to neutralize growing North Korean nuclear threats.

Wednesday's failed missile firing was the North's 10th weapons launch this year. The U.S. and South Korean militaries said they concluded that two of North Korea's recent launches before Wednesday's were meant to test a Hwasong-17 system. North Korea later said those launches were designed to test cameras and other systems for a spy satellite.

4 dead, 1 missing after boat sinks in NZ storm

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — A chartered fishing boat carrying 10 people sank in stormy weather off the New Zealand coast, and police said four people were confirmed dead and one other was missing. Five people were winched by a helicopter to safety and the search was continuing.

The 17-meter (56-foot) boat got into trouble and set off a distress signal on Sunday night off North Cape on the northern coast, triggering a major search and rescue operation.

Two bodies in the water were recovered by helicopter on Monday morning, and another two were recovered by search vessels, police said.

The five rescued people were admitted to Kaitaia Hospital in stable conditions and were later discharged.

Nick Burt, a spokesman for Maritime NZ's Rescue Coordination Center, said an emergency beacon was activated at 8 p.m. A helicopter became the first search and rescue vehicle to reach the remote location at 11:40 p.m., Burt said.

The boat was confirmed sunk at 2:30 a.m., he said.

The search Monday was being coordinated by a navy patrol boat with helicopters in the air and ground crews scouring the shoreline, Burt said.

"The weather conditions are more favorable today, and we are completely focused on the search and rescue for the two people unaccounted for," Burt said in a statement before one body was recovered by a ship.

The fishing boat had left the northern port of Mangonui on Thursday, the Stuff news website reported.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Ferry sinks near Bangladesh capital; at least 6 dead

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)—Rescuers on Sunday recovered six bodies after a cargo vessel hit a ferry carrying dozens of people along a river outside Bangladesh's capital, officials and survivors said. It was not clear immediately how many are still missing. Fire Service official Rozina Akhter said they could not determine how many were on board the ferry. Local media reported between 30 and 50 people were on the ferry when the collision occurred in Narayanganj, just outside Dhaka.

US to declare Rohingya repression in Myanmar a 'genocide'

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Biden administration intends to declare that Myanmar's years-long repression of the Rohingya Muslim population is a "genocide," U.S. officials said Sunday. Secretary of State Antony Blinken plans to make the long-anticipated designation on Monday at an event at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, according to the officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because the move had not yet been publicly announced. The designation does not in and of itself portend drastic new measures against Myanmar's military-led government, which has already been hit with multiple layers of U.S. sanctions since the campaign against the Rohingya ethnic minority began in the country's western Rakhine state in 2017. But it could lead to additional international pressure on the government, which is already facing accusations of genocide at the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

S. Korea's next leader to abandon Blue House for new office

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea's incoming president said Sunday he will abandon the mountainside presidential palace of Blue House and establish his office at the Defense Ministry compound in central Seoul to better communicate with the public. The plan drew an immediate backlash from critics of the relocation plan, who warned that a hasty movement of top government offices would undermine South Korea's national security, require excessive spending and violate property rights of residents in the new presidential office area. Relocating the presidential office was one of President-elect Yoon Suk Yeol's main campaign promises. The conservative former top prosecutor whose single five-year term begins on May 10 said the location and design of the Blue House have fed criticism that South Korean leaders are cut off from the public and wield excessive power.

World

AP

A soldier smokes a cigarette while walking next to a destroyed building after a bombing in Satoya neighborhood in Kyiv, Ukraine, Sunday, March 20, 2022.

Russia demands Mariupol lay down arms; Ukraine says no

LVIV, Ukraine (AP)—As it continued its barrage of the besieged city of Mariupol, Russia demanded that Ukrainians put down their arms and raise white flags on Monday in exchange for safe passage out of town.

Ukraine angrily rejected the offer, which came hours after officials said Russian forces had bombed an art school that was sheltering some 400 people.

■■■

LVIV, Ukraine—An ammonia leak at a chemical plant in the eastern Ukrainian city of Sumy has contaminated an area with a radius of more than 2.5 kilometers (about 1.5 miles), officials said early Monday.

Sumy regional governor Dmytro Zhyvytskyy didn't say what caused the leak.

The Sumykhimprom plant is on the eastern outskirts of the city, which has a population of about 263,000 and has been regularly shelled by Russian troops in recent weeks.

"For the center of Sumy, there is no threat now, since the wind does not blow on the city," said Zhyvytskyy.

He said the nearby village of Novoselytsya, about 1.5 kilometers (1 mile) southeast of Sumy, is under threat.

Emergency crews were working to contain the leak.

■■■

While the fight for control of the strategically important city remained intense, Western governments and analysts see the broader conflict shifting to a war of attrition.

Russian Col. Gen. Mikhail Mizintsev said it would allow two corridors out of Mariupol, heading either east toward Russia or west to other parts of Ukraine.

Mariupol residents were given until 5 a.m. Monday to respond to the offer. Russia didn't say what action it would take if it was rejected.

But Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Irina Vereshchuk said no.

"There can be no talk of any surrender, laying down of arms. We have already informed the Russian side about this," she told the news outlet Ukrainian Pravda. "I wrote: `Instead of wasting time on eight pages of letters, just open the corridor.'"

Mariupol Mayor Piotr Andryushchenko also rejected the offer, saying in a Facebook post he didn't need to wait until morning to respond and cursing at the Russians, according to the news agency Interfax Ukraine.

The Russian Ministry of Defense said authorities in Mariupol could face a military tribunal if they sided with what it described as "bandits," the Russian state news agency RIA Novosti reported.

Previous bids to allow residents to evacuate Mariupol and other Ukrainian cities have failed or have been only partially successful, with bombardments continuing as civilians sought to flee.

Speaking in a video address early Monday, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said about 400 civilians were taking shelter at the art school when it was struck by a Russian bomb.

"They are under the rubble, and we don't know how many of them have survived," he said. "But we know that we will certainly shoot down the pilot who dropped that bomb, like about 100 other such mass murderers whom we already have downed."

Tearful evacuees from the devastated Azov Sea port city have described how "battles took place over every street."

The fall of Mariupol would allow Russian forces in southern and eastern Ukraine to link up. But Western military analysts say that even if the surrounded city is taken, the troops battling a block at a time for control there may be too depleted to help secure Russian breakthroughs on other fronts.

Three weeks into the invasion, Western governments and analysts see the conflict shifting to a war of attrition, with bogged down Russian forces launching long-range missiles at cities and military bases as Ukrainian forces carry out hit-and-run attacks and seek to sever their supply lines.

Ukrainians "have not greeted Russian soldiers with a bunch of flowers," Zelenskyy told CNN, but with "weapons in their hands."

Moscow cannot hope to rule the country, he added, given Ukrainians' enmity toward the Russian forces.

The strike on the art school was the second time in less than a week that officials reported an attack on a public building where Mariupol residents had taken shelter. On Wednesday, a bomb hit a theater where more than 1,000 people were believed to be sheltering.

Overdrive

How to buy and install an EV home charger

By RUSS MITCHELL
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Gas prices? Pah! A few months ago, my family bought an electric car, used. A little 2018 BMW i3s. It looks weird but it drives great. Every time I pass long lines of cars and trucks waiting to fill up on $6-a-gallon gas, I admit, I feel a schadenfreude smile coming on.

But buying the car, it turns out, was a lot easier than buying a home charger and getting it installed, which was a serious hassle. Worth it in the end, but a hassle. And that government rebate I thought I'd been promised? Yeah, right.

You can get by without a home charger but I wouldn't advise it. There are too few public chargers available at present for dependable refueling. And the price you pay is significantly higher than your cost of electricity at home.

A home charger isn't cheap, though. Including installation, depending on what model you buy, the cost can top $1,500.

Hunting for a home charger is a bit of a hassle too. The hassle can be small or large depending on variables that include the age of your home, the state of its electrical system and how easy it is to find an installer in your area.

If stories about $7-a-gallon gasoline have you thinking it's time for an EV, though, here are some hard-won tips that might save you some headaches.

THE BASICS

The first step is deciding whether you want a Level 1 or Level 2 charger.

Level 1 operates at 120 volts. That's the voltage you use to run your toaster and most of your home's electricity. Level 2 is 240 volts, what an electric dryer requires. Level 2 chargers will fill your EV a lot faster from empty than a Level 1: a couple hours or so, depending on the size of your battery, versus overnight.

You'll probably get a portable Level 1 charger included when you get your car. If most of your trips are local, or you can charge at work, or buy a plug-in hybrid instead of a battery-only electric, a Level 1 might work just fine.

If you want the flexibility of a relatively fast fill-up and more freedom from range anxiety, you're a candidate for a more expensive but more powerful Level 2. That's what we chose.

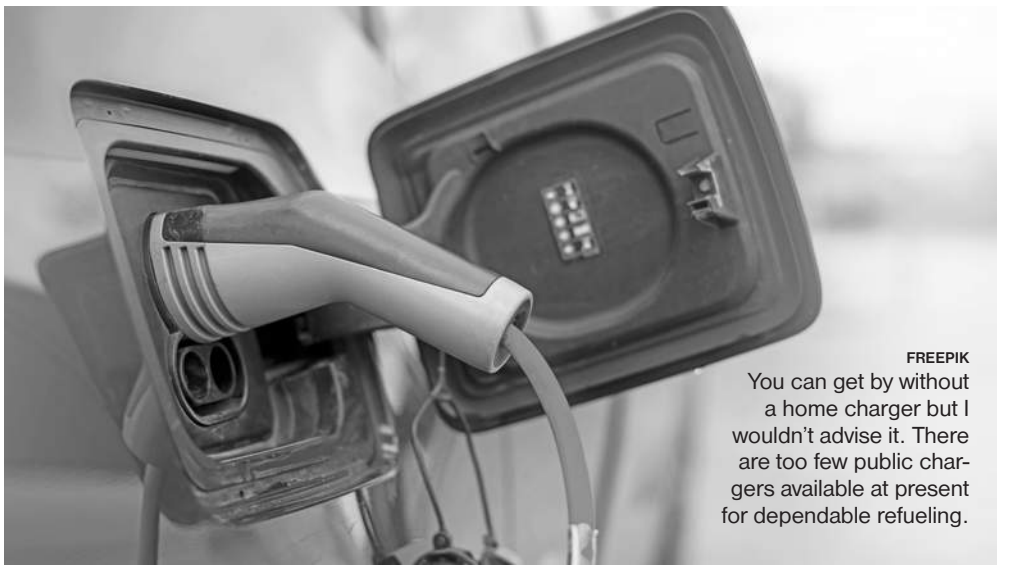
Level 2 chargers require 240 volts and a socket like an electric dryer might use. If you have a 240-volt outlet near where you'll park your car, good for you. Installation will be a lot easier. (A charger also can be connected directly to your electric panel, obviating the need for an outlet.)

Chargers come with cords of different lengths. You'll want to measure the distance from where you put your charger to where you'll park your car. Shorter cords make for less expensive chargers. I'd rather have too much than not enough and went for a 25-foot cord. If you'll always be parking in a tight garage space, you can get by with something shorter and cheaper.

Portable 240-volt chargers are available, but you'll get only about 10 miles of range per hour. If you want to fill up fairly fast and have your car ready to go when you need it, a stationary charger is the way to go.

BUYING

An internet search will turn up loads of sites that rank home chargers. For a comprehensive overview of what's available, Veloz, an EV advocacy site, is a good first step.



FREEPIK
You can get by without a home charger but I wouldn't advise it. There are too few public chargers available at present for dependable refueling.

Level 2 charger prices range from nearly $300 to well over $1,000. The bigger your car battery, the more expensive your charger is likely to be. Veloz pegs the typical cost of installation around $500. It can be lower or it can cost several thousand dollars, depending on how your home's electrical system is configured and whether you need a 240v outlet installed.

Unless you are well versed in volts and amps and kilowatts and kilowatt hours, you should ask an electrician or someone with expertise in the area for advice before you choose your charger. The requirements of your car's battery and the configuration of your home electrical system are major factors in charger choice.

You'll also have to ask yourself how important it is to be able to control charging times through a charger's software, allowing you to take advantage of your utility's variable time-of-day electric rates and potentially prolong your battery's life. Many experts suggest you not fill your battery all the way full because that can degrade performance. Charger software can set a limit at, say, 90% full.

You'll also need to know whether you want to install the charger inside a garage or outdoors—many chargers are advertised as weatherproof.

Which brand is best? After spending much time comparing models online, I found a ChargePoint model that topped many best-of lists and tried to buy one. Alas, ChargePoint told me I couldn't expect the charger to arrive for at least several weeks. Popularity has its price.

My neighbor bought a charger from Wallbox and got it in a couple of days. I did too. The reviews were good. It's working fine so far, although the software interface could be much improved. I paid $649 plus tax.

INSTALLING

Wallbox posts an excellent installation guide online that can apply to any charger make or model. With any luck, you'll be able to hire an electrician at a reasonable price and he or she will take care of everything for you.

I wasn't so lucky. Our Berkeley house was built 60 years ago. No 240v outlet in the garage. Worse, the house is fed by a 100-amp Pacific Gas & Electric power line; the lines to modern houses are rated at 200 amps. Practically speaking, the 100-amp line means that adding an electric car to the house's load could overpower the whole system. The situation would demand some changes to our electric supply panel.

Finding an electrician to help was tough. It's hard to find a tradesman to do anything lately—too few workers with the proper skills, too much home improvement demand. One electrician informed us our electric panel is way out of date, and that building codes would require a new one. We'd also need a 200-amp line to the house. Total cost, he said, would top $2,000.

With the help of a neighbor who's a lighting architect and ace handyman, I was able to get the job done for the price of materials and a nice dinner.

If you have an older home, do some research on home electric load capacities to better communicate with the professional electricians you might hire.

THE REBATE

Rebates from the government or electric utilities depend on where you live. Put your ZIP Code into the Veloz site and then click on a charger model to find out what's available to you. If your electricity comes from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the utility says you can get up to $1,000 back, even more if you qualify as low-income. But the actual amount, based on numerous Veloz searches, is likely to be a few hundred dollars. Residents of the South Coast Air Quality Management District can get another several hundred dollars, but the money is available "first come first served," so you can't count on funds being there.

The city of Anaheim says charger buyers can qualify for $400 to $1,000 in rebates, "subject to the availability of funds." The city of Burbank advertises rebates up to $500.

If you bought a charger in 2021, you may be eligible for a federal income tax credit for 30% of the charger's cost. If you waited until 2022, you're out of luck.

Here in Berkeley, I qualified for rebates totaling $0. My utility, the financially troubled Pacific Gas & Electric, offers no home EV charger incentives at all.

But driving an EV can save $800 or more a year for an average driver, and the warm feeling I get driving past those gas station price signs makes up for a zero rebate, and then some.

MOTORMOUTH: Possible ignition fix

Q: I read your article on the ignition problems of a 2008 GMC Canyon with the 3.7-liter motor. I have the 2010 model with the same engine and had the same no-start issue. After a couple of warranty visits, the dealer asked to keep the truck for tests. The ignition lock change didn't solve the issue. What apparently worked was that the mechanic located, disconnected and cleaned all the ground points he could find based on the schematics for the model year. I still have the truck 115,250 miles later; so far, no issues with the ignition.

A: You found an excellent technician. Very few will spend the time to be so thorough. Chasing ground connections is like a dog chasing its tail.

Q: I have a 2006 Chevy Trail Blazer with 155,000 miles and runs great. My problem is that, for the past year, the vehicle will sometimes fail to start after being driven. I have had numerous parts replaced (fuel pump, mass air flow sensor, spark plugs, ignition switch, etc.) and the starting problem continues. The failure to start only occurs when the vehicle has been driven and then parked such as when going to the grocery store. If I then wait 30 to 45 minutes, the vehicle will restart. Any thoughts on a potential cause?

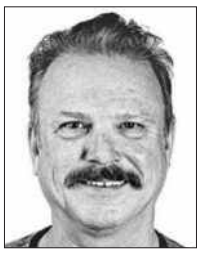
A: If the engine does not crank, the problem probably lies with the starter. One trick I have used over the years is to tap the starter with something such as a tool or small hammer. If that gets you going, go to your favorite shop for a replacement. If it cranks but does not start, the problem is something else.

Q: I recently purchased a car in Arizona. They added a charge for nitrogen in the tires that included lifetime fills. Is this something necessary in the hot climates or just a scam? I am going with a scam.

A: I would not call a $10 to $15 per-tire charge a scam, but the customer should be told of the option upfront. Free lifetime inflation fills seems silly if nitrogen is unlikely to escape. There is an argument that nitrogen molecules are less likely to pass through the rubber than plain air. Plain air is, however, roughly 80 percent nitrogen. Go figure. I use air and have never had an issue. Of course, it is rare to find free air nowadays. Gas stations may no longer have pay toilets, but they do have pay air compressors.

Q: Your reply to J. & G.J. regarding high octane was spot on, but additionally, use of low octane fuel in a high compression engine will likely cause engine knock just as you said, which should be detected by the engine's knock sensor. Thus (if all systems are working), ignition timing will be hindered and performance and economy will be reduced.

A: Your reply to my reply is spot on. At the first sign of engine knock, the sensor will send a signal to the powertrain control module, which will then incrementally back off the ignition timing until the sound stops. So, if you expect top performance from a turbocharged or high-performance engine, you are encouraged to use premium, high-octane fuel.



By BOB WEBER
Chicago Tribune

Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. *Send questions along with name and town to Motormouth, Rides, Chicago Tribune, 160 N. Stetson Ave., Fourth Floor, Chicago, IL 60601 or motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.*

Life & Style

‘CODA’ gains Oscar momentum with top prize at PGA Awards

LOS ANGELES (AP)—“CODA” won the top prize at Saturday night’s Producers Guild Awards, giving momentum to the possibility that the small film could have a big night at next week’s Oscars.

The story of three adult family members who are deaf and a fourth who is not and seeks a singing career beat out bigger contenders including “The Power of the Dog,” “Dune” and “West Side Story” to take an award that—more often than not—goes on to win the Academy Award for best picture.

“This movie has been an amazing ride, it was such a special one to make, there was so much love and so much heart put into it,” said Fabrice Gianfermi as he accepted the award with his “CODA” co-producers Philippe Rousselet and Patrick Wachsberger at the 33rd PGA Awards.

An American Sign Language translator, who had been off to one side of the stage throughout the night’s speeches, stood front and center during the “CODA” acceptance and another stood in front of the stage to translate for the three actors from the film who are deaf: Troy Kotsur, Marlee Matlin and Daniel Durant.

“CODA,” an acronym for “children of deaf adults,” is nominated for three Oscars at the March 27 ceremony, including best adapted screenplay for writer-director Sian Heder and best supporting actor for Kotsur, who is expected by most to become the first actor who is deaf since Matlin in 1987 to win an Oscar.

After it won best ensemble at last month’s Screen Actors Guild Awards it began to appear “CODA” could get real consideration for best picture. The odds may be getting better. The top PGA award winner has gone on to win the top Oscar in three of the past four years and 10 of the past 13. Academy Award voting closes Tuesday.

The PGA Awards, an untelevised show from the Fairmont Century Plaza in Los Angeles honoring producers of film and television, is as much like a company awards banquet as a typical awards show, with no speeches cut short for time or curses bleeped out.

“Producing some s--- is really f------ hard,” said Issa Rae, producer of “Insecure” and “A Black Lady Sketch Show” as she accepted the guild’s Visionary Award.

Ninety-year-old Rita Moreno, star of the both the 1961 and 2021 versions of “West Side Story,” accepted the guild’s Stanley Kramer Award, which honors someone who has combined a career of artistry and activism.

“This business has taken tenacity and hard work,” Moreno said. “Advocating for issues of social justice for the last 60 years, it’s been exhausting, exhilarating and life-giving.”

Moreno said the night itself was both joyful and exhausting after taking the stage at 11 p.m. local time, nearly three hours into the show.

“I was really getting tired,” she said. “My buttocks are a bit sore.”

George Lucas and Kathleen Kennedy, stewards of the Star Wars universe and producers of many other notable motion pictures, were honored for their careers with the PGA’s Milestone Award.

Presenter Steven Spielberg, whose films have produced by both Lucas and Kennedy, called them “two titans” who are “still just like kids playing in a sandbox.”

Lucas acknowledged that his favorite achievement may not be the most popular among his peers, including the one who introduced him Saturday.

“The thing I’m the most proud of is digital cinema. That was something that I worked on for 20 years. Spent many many millions of dollars to make it happen,” Lucas said. “Some still don’t believe in it. Where’s Steven?”

‘The Batman,’ still No. 1, crosses $300 million

By LINDSEY BAHR
AP FILM WRITER

(JONATHAN OLLEY/WARNER BROS. PICTURES VIA AP)

This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Zoe Kravitz, left, and Robert Pattinson in a scene from “The Batman.” “The Batman” is still going strong three weeks into its theatrical run, with a tight grip on the top spot at the box office. Robert Pattinson’s debut as the Dark Knight earned an additional $36.8 million over the weekend, according to studio estimates Sunday, March 20, 2022. It also slid past the $300 million mark ahead of projections.

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Robert Pattinson’s debut as the Dark Knight earned an additional $36.8 million over the weekend, according to studio estimates Sunday. It also slid past the $300 million mark ahead of projections.

The Warner Bros. film is the highest grossing movie of 2022 and the second highest since the beginning of the pandemic (first place goes to “Spider-Man: No Way Home”).

“The Batman,” directed by Matt Reeves, also picked up $49.1 million internationally this weekend, bringing its global total to $598.1 million. The only place “The Batman” seems to be stumbling is in China where it earned $12.1 million in its first weekend. But about 43% of cinemas in China are closed due to the pandemic and “The Batman” still did slightly better than “Unchartered” which also opened there this weekend to $10.3 million.

“The Batman” cost an estimated $200 million to make, not counting the many millions spent on marketing. But it is already a win for Warner Bros., which took at hit at the box office in 2021 because all of its films were released simultaneously in theaters and on HBO Max.

It also helps that marketplace competition has been slim. The biggest competitor this weekend was the anime “Jujutsu Kaisen 0,” which was released by Crunchyroll and Funimation, and took in an estimated $17.7 million in its first weekend in North America, where it was playing on 2,748 screens. The Japanese film is based on a best-selling manga and available to watch dubbed or with subtitles.

“Fans made this movie a big hit this weekend,” said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore. “It shows how passionate fans of anime are and how beautiful these films are when presented on the big screen.”

Ye no longer performing at Grammys

NEW YORK (AP)—Ye will not be performing at the Grammys this year. A report published in The Blast said that the musician was told Friday that his act had been pulled from the show, which is set to take place on April 3.

A representative for Ye, who changed his name from Kanye West, confirmed the information in The Blast article in an email to the Associated Press. She did not offer additional comment.

Ye had not been confirmed yet as someone set to perform at the show, which has announced acts such as Billie Eilish, BTS, Lil’ Nas X and Olivia Rodrigo. Ye’s album “Donda” is nominated for album of the year. Representatives from the Recording Academy have not responded to multiple requests for comment.

According to reports, the decision was made in response to his “concerning online behavior.”

Trevor Noah, who is hosting the Grammy Awards, called Ye’s treatment of his ex-wife Kim Kardashian “more and more belligerent” on The Daily Show last week.

“What we’re seeing here is one of the most powerful, one of the richest women in the world unable to get her ex to stop texting her, to stop chasing after her, to stop harassing her,” Noah said.

Beau shows no desire to grow relationship

DEAR ABBY: I have been dating “Brent” for four years. Prior to meeting him, I was divorced with two children. Brent shows little interest in my kids’ lives. He doesn’t want us to live together before the kids are out of the house, and he never plans to get married. (My youngest is 10.)

Even if he would agree to move in now, I don’t want to move to his city because my kids need to be close to their school, their friends and their father. Brent doesn’t want to relocate because it’s heavily populated and he thinks my town is geared more toward a younger generation.

I really would like to take our relationship to the next level. I have been trying to do it for four years, but he ignores my subtle hints. I can’t imagine life without him. I have even considered getting pregnant to make this relationship go further, in spite of knowing he doesn’t want a baby. Advice?

GETTING DESPERATE IN THE HEARTLAND

DEAR GETTING DESPERATE: You have wasted four years of your life on the wrong man. Brent is centered on himself and would be a negative, disruptive influence in your children’s lives. Your first responsibility must be to them. If they were miserable, you would be too. Trust me on that.

As to the idea of “trapping” him by becoming pregnant in spite of the fact that he doesn’t want to be a father—I DON’T RECOMMEND IT! You could get a rude awakening and end up parenting a child you didn’t really want all by yourself. So start imagining a life without him. It will be a happier one that way.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: I have a co-worker I enjoyed talking to and being around. I’m 27, and she is 41. We used to sit together at lunch and during our break. All of a sudden, she stopped sitting with me during the first break but she still ate with me at lunch. Then she stopped eating with me at lunch!

I asked her if I said or did anything wrong and she said no. I asked her if she was avoiding me or had found something wrong, and she insisted there was nothing wrong and I worry too much. So now I sit alone and she sits somewhere else by herself with her phone. I was nice to her. We talked about our day and sometimes shared snacks during the break. All that is gone now.

I know people grow apart, but it stings. Being an adult means moving on, but when something happens for no apparent reason, there has to be an explanation. Can you share your insight on this dilemma?

LUNCHING ALONE

DEAR LUNCHING ALONE: There is always a reason. Perhaps you should believe your co-worker when she says you didn’t do or say anything wrong. What may have changed are her circumstances. You mentioned that rather than sit with you, she now sits alone with her cellphone. It’s possible that something is going on with her family—or her personal life that requires her attention. I know it stings, but you have to let it go. Find someone else to socialize with during breaks. It would be less painful if she explained it to you, but your co-worker may be a private person.

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

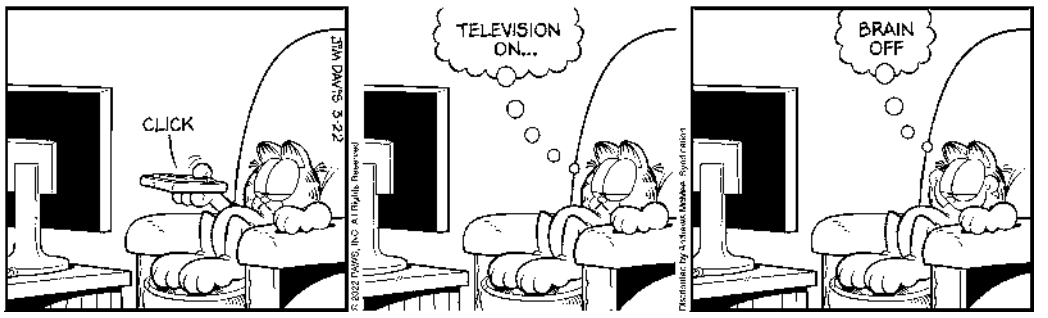
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



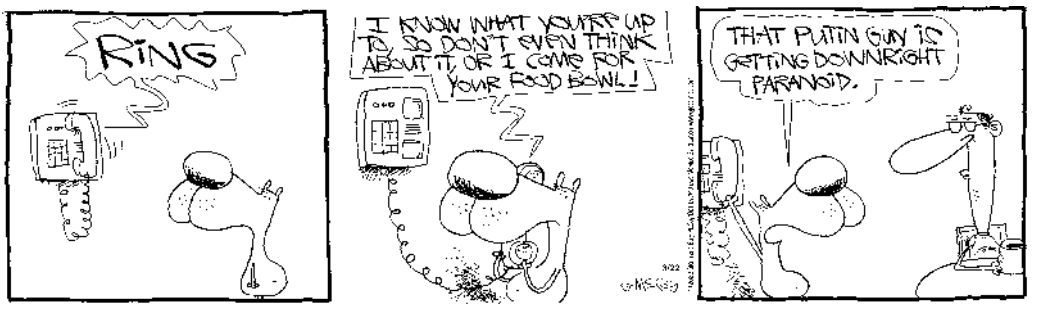
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

WHAT'S WITH YOU?
JOSH.
OH! THAT HORRIBLE CLIENT? WHAT'S SO BAD ABOUT HIM?
JUST... EVERYTHING.
CAN YOU BE MORE SPECIFIC?
SPECIFICALLY, IT'S HIS JOSHINESS.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


RING
I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE UP TO SO DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT, OR I COME FOR YOUR FOOD BOWL!
THAT PUTIN GUY IS GETTING DOWNRIGHT PARANOID.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Classic Monopoly token
5 601, to Nero
8 Gospel writer
12 Squad
13 Tic-tac-toe win
14 Writer James
15 K thru 12
16 Snake handlers?
18 Advertised
20 Critic Roger
21 "Crying" singer Orbison
22 Hydrocarbon ending
23 Trifled (with)
26 Guys and dolls, e.g.
30 — Jima
31 Tourist's chart
32 Reuben bread
33 More zaftig
36 Spoken for
38 Sound of delight
39 Samovar
40 Cauterizes
43 Dove deep
47 Most luxurious
49 Shoppe description
50 Staffer
51 Blemish
52 Meditative practice
53 Banister
54 Acting coach Hagen
55 Raced

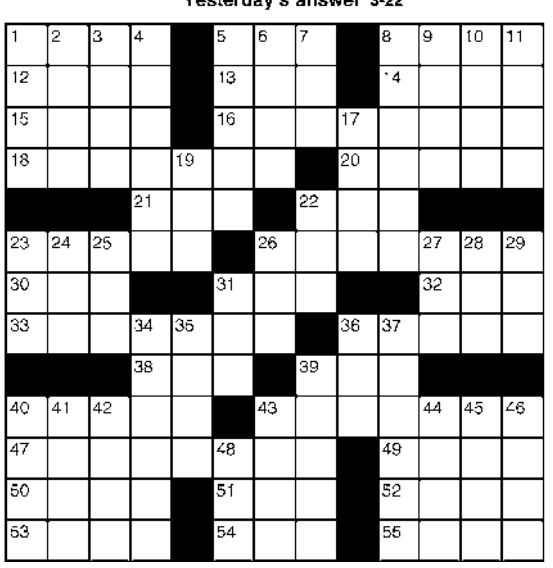
DOWN

1 Dance move
2 Underworld
3 Pearl Harbor site
4 Asylum seeker, perhaps
5 Inane
6 Frigid
7 Debtor's letters
8 Talk rapidly
9 Curved molding
10 Frankfurt fellow
11 Egg container
17 Carte
19 Deity
22 Jungfrau, e.g.
23 Bit of advice
24 Hooter
25 Thee
26 Standard
27 Genesis vessel
28 Caustic cleaner
29 D.C. bigwig
31 "Not impressed ..."
34 Wee bite
35 Ritzy
36 Capote nickname
37 Irks
39 Prefix with violet
40 Mast
41 Lamb alias
42 German car name
43 Jrs.' exam
44 Icky stuff
45 Perimeter
46 Conked out
48 Big bird of Australia

Solution time: 22 mins.

O	A	K	S		C	O	B		G	O	A	D
M	C	I	I		J	A	I		L	U	R	E
A	H	E	M		L	O	O	S	E	T	E	A
R	E	V	O	L	T		S	I	N	B	A	D
			N	O	J	N		E	D	U		
L	I	M	E	T	R	E	E		A	R	K	S
I	C	U		T	A	P	A	S		S	E	A
T	E	S	S		L	A	S	E	R	T	A	G
		K	L	M		L	I	R	E			
S	E	R	I	E	S		N	A	C	H	O	S
L	E	A	D	T	I	M	E		O	A	R	S
A	R	T	E		T	O	S		I	L	E	T
B	O	S	S		S	O	S		L	E	O	S

Yesterday's answer 3-22



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Reese Witherspoon, 46; Elvis Stojko, 50; Bob Costas, 70; William Shatner, 91.

Happy Birthday: Discipline, budgeting and completion will free your spirit and encourage you to set new goals. Take your time and stop worrying about keeping up or competing with others. Concentrating on what makes you happy eases stress and gives you exciting options. Put personal gain, romance and health first. Your numbers are 7, 10, 22, 28, 33, 41, 45.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Use common sense, do what you can justify and keep your plans to yourself until you reach a point of no return. Control what you do and what you want. Don't let outside influences interfere. Put your energy where it counts. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Pursue what makes you feel passionate. Don't let obstacles defeat you. Embrace a challenge with an open mind, and you'll find a way to exceed your expectations. Align yourself with people who aren't afraid to do things differently. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* What you achieve counts. Put your efforts into physically accomplishing your goals. Take care of details and iron out differences before you enter into an agreement or choose to agree to a plan that makes you responsible. Read the fine print. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Branch out and see what you can do with your skills, knowledge and attributes. Explore what's trending, and you'll discover something that interests you. Step back from joint ventures and toward endeavors that you can pursue alone. Contracts will be misleading. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Expand your interests. Venture out and discover what's happening in your community or chosen profession. Add to your qualifications or look for a unique way to use your skills. An imaginative approach to how you do things will pay off. ✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Pay attention to detail, and finish what you start. Don't leave yourself open for criticism. Take an interest in what family and friends are doing, and be a part of what matters. A change in routine will require discipline and planning. ✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Pay attention to your needs: take a break, pamper yourself, or find a solution that will help encourage better health, organization and money management. Avoid shared expenses, joint ventures and unnecessary change. Make love, romance or a creative endeavor a priority. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Keep the peace. Back down and pay attention to what you can do to improve your life. Hone your skills, and incorporate a plan that encourages the pursuit of happiness and fulfillment. Don't let anger or revenge be your demise. 3 stars

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Oversee everything important. Domestic problems will surface if careful money management isn't in place. Put your heart and soul into taking care of institutional or governmental matters in order to avoid penalties. Be upfront about your feelings and what you want. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Know what you are up against, and take care of matters swiftly. Use your imagination when it comes to money and how best to handle people who ask for too much. Be willing to do the work yourself to avoid disappointment. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Revisit your responsibilities, and find out how to get things done without interference. Stick to your plan, work alone, don't stop until you are satisfied with the results. Don't take a backseat to someone making changes you don't like. ✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Call on someone who can offer inside information or help you create something that will protect you against loss. Take care of your physical and emotional well-being. Don't take a risk or give in to someone putting pressure on you. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are determined, original and persuasive. You are challenging and persistent.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

1			3	5				9
	8		6				1	
		3		9		7		
							4	3
6		4				1		5
7	1							
		8		1		9		
	2				9		6	
4				6	5			7

Difficulty Level ★★ 3/22

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

4	3	7	2	6	1	5	8	9
2	5	8	9	3	4	7	6	1
6	9	1	8	7	5	3	4	2
5	4	9	3	1	2	8	7	6
8	7	6	4	5	9	1	2	3
3	1	2	6	8	7	9	5	4
7	6	4	5	9	3	2	1	8
1	8	3	7	2	6	4	9	5
9	2	5	1	4	8	6	3	7

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

ONLINE DATING **Solution: 7 letters**

I	L	T	E	N	R	E	T	N	I	M	A	T	C	H
N	N	A	P	A	S	S	W	O	R	D	Ⓣ	Ⓐ	Ⓗ	Ⓒ
I	O	T	N	R	S	S	E	E	K	I	N	G	A	A
N	S	I	E	O	C	E	X	G	E	N	D	E	R	T
T	S	V	S	R	S	P	G	P	H	O	N	E	A	T
E	E	S	U	S	E	R	N	A	M	E	V	L	C	N
R	C	E	I	R	E	S	E	E	S	O	K	A	T	R
A	C	T	T	N	A	F	T	P	C	S	R	C	E	A
C	U	S	L	F	G	A	O	S	O	T	E	T	R	E
T	S	A	E	E	M	L	I	R	T	E	A	M	I	L
I	R	T	A	V	M	D	E	A	P	E	M	F	S	O
O	Y	U	D	O	U	E	T	S	H	H	R	A	T	C
N	D	I	S	L	I	K	E	S	O	C	E	C	I	A
H	A	B	I	T	S	N	X	T	T	I	T	E	C	L
A	P	P	L	I	C	A	T	I	O	N	T	S	S	S

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Application, Attract, Characteristics, Chat, Discover, Dislikes, Email, Experts, Faces, Gender, Habits, Heat, Interaction, Interests, Internet, Leads, Learn, Locals, Love, Match, Mate, Meet, Messages, Niche, Password, Personal, Phone, Photo, Profession, Reverse, Safety, Seeking, Singles, Success, Talk, Tastes, Term, Text, Trust, Username

Yesterday's Answer: Givenchy

To purchase **THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 50, 51 and 53 through 66,** order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Shamet hits key 3-pointer in OT, Suns rally to beat Kings

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—Landry Shamet made a 3-pointer with 31 seconds left in overtime moments after missing an open look beyond the arc and the NBA-leading Phoenix Suns beat the Sacramento Kings 127-124 on Sunday.

Damian Jones gave the Kings a 121-120 lead with a putback dunk not long after the Suns star Devin Booker fouled out. Shamet's 25-foot try missed, but Phoenix grabbed the rebound. Following a timeout, Shamet hit his fifth 3-pointer of the game to put the Suns ahead by two.

"Shot a million of those," Shamet said. "At that point it is what it is. Live with the result – it went in. We just find ways to win games. It's been our MO this year and it's going to be incredibly valuable moving forward."

After Mikal Bridges — who had 27 points for short-handed Phoenix — made the second of two free throws, Jones made one from the stripe, but missed the second. Aaron Holiday grabbed the rebound and Torrey Craig dunked.

Booker scored 19 of his 31 points in the third quarter as the Suns won their fifth straight to improve to 58-14 — nine games ahead of second-place Memphis for the best record in the league.

"I'm proud of the way we stayed with it," Suns coach Monty Williams said. "For us to get a win here, with all the guys that we have out, is pretty huge. Landry made a big shot. Coaches try to draw up a play but it's the players who execute and have the will to take those shots."

Shamet finished with 21 points. Center Deandre Ayton had 12 points and 10 rebounds before fouling out late in the fourth quarter. Backup center JaVale McGee had 14 points before fouling out in overtime.

Already missing All-Star point guard Chris Paul (broken right thumb) and sixth-man Cam Johnson (right quad contusion), the Suns were with without backup point guard Cam Payne because of a non-COVID-19 illness. Jae Crowder, who returned following a two-game absence due to groin soreness, limped off with a right foot injury in the third quarter.

"It takes a special group to do what we did," Booker said. "Three guys fouling out and other guys stepping up, they looked ready to go. Credit to our whole team, top to bottom, and coach. We were happy with this one."

Davion Mitchell, starting in place of injured point guard De'Aaron Fox, had 28 points and nine assists for Sacramento. Domantas Sabonis had 18 points, 12 rebounds and six assists before leaving with an apparent left knee injury in the fourth quarter. The Kings have lost 10 of 13.

AP

Phoenix Suns guard Landry Shamet (14) shoots and scores a three point shot late in overtime of an NBA basketball game against the Sacramento Kings in Sacramento, Calif., Sunday, March 20, 2022.

"The competitiveness is there and the will to win is there," Kings interim coach Alvin Gentry said. "We just have to do a much better job of closing."

Booker put the Suns ahead 110-108 with eight seconds left in the fourth quarter before Mitchell's layup forced overtime. McGee scored six of the Suns first eight points in overtime.

Spurs 110, Warriors 108

In San Francisco, Keldon Johnson scored off a rebound of a missed free throw with three-tenths of a second left to give the San Antonio Spurs a 110-108 victory over the Golden State Warriors on Sunday night.

Jakob Poeltl made the first of two free throws to it at 108 with 2.4 seconds left. He missed the second off the back iron, but Johnson grabbed the rebound and converted the winner. Klay Thompson missed a 3-pointer from the right corner as time expired.

Josh Richardson led the Spurs with 25 points, and Dejounte Murray had 19.

Jordan Poole scored 28 points, and Thompson had 24 Golden State. Playing their first game since losing Stephen Curry to a left foot injury, the third-place Warriors dropped 1 1/2 games behind second-place Memphis and 10 1/2 games back of NBA-leading Phoenix.

Grizzlies 122, Rockets 98

In Houston, Desmond Bane had 24 points and the Memphis Grizzlies overcame the absence of star Ja Morant with balanced scoring in a victory over NBA-worst Houston.

Bane was one of six Memphis players to score at least 13 points on a day Morant sat out with a sore knee. Dillon Brooks added 20 points, and De'Anthony Melton had 16 points and seven rebounds.

Dennis Schroder had 17 points off the bench for Houston.

Raptors 93, 76ers 88

In Philadelphia Pascal Siakam had 26 points and 10 rebounds, and Precious Achiuwa scored 21 points to lead Toronto past Philadelphia for its sixth straight road victory,

Chris Boucher added 12 points and 14 rebounds for the Raptor.

Joel Embiid had 21 points and 13 rebounds for Philadelphia. He shot only 6 of 20 overall from the floor and missed all three 3-pointers. Tyrese Maxey scored 19 points, and James Harden had 17.

Jazz 108, Knicks 93

In New York, Donovan Mitchell scored 36 points and Utah beat New York,

Jordan Clarkson came off the bench to score 18 of his 23 points in the first half for the Jazz, who opened a six-game road trip with the first of two games in two nights in New York. Rudy Gobert and Royce O'Neale each had 14 points.

Mitchell, a New Yorker who got a nice ovation before the game, made seven 3-pointers and threw down a powerful dunk midway through the fourth quarter,

RJ Barrett scored 24 points and Evan Fournier had 17 for New York.

Celtics 124, Nuggets 104

In Denver, Jaylen Brown and Jayson Tatum each scored 30 points and Boston beat Denver,

The Celtics shot 57.3% from the floor and finished 19 of 40 from 3-point range. They also hit all 11 of their free throws.

Nikola Jokic had 23 points for Denver, but missed 14 shots in the first half and finished 8 of 23 from the floor.

The Celtics outshot Denver 64.3% to 30.6% in the first half, and their bench outscored the Nuggets' reserves by a whopping 29-14. Nuggets coach Michael Malone made a statement by starting the second half with his bench players on the court — Austin Rivers, Bones Hyland, DeMarcus Cousins, Davon Reed and JaMychal Green.

Pelicans 117, Hawks 112

In Atlanta, Jonas Valanciunas had 26 points and 12 rebounds, CJ McCollum added 25 points and New Orleans beat Atlanta.

The Pelicans moved into ninth place in the Western Conference. They have won their last two and three of four and were without leading scorer Brandon Ingram and fourth-leading scorer Devonte' Graham.

Danilo Gallinari scored 25 points for Atlanta.

Pacers 129, Trail Blazers 98

In Indianapolis, Oshae Brissett scored 24 points, Justin Anderson had 18 and Indiana cruised past Portland.

Brissett was 8 of 10 from the field and made six free throws without a miss. He also led Indiana with nine rebounds.

Josh Hart had 26 points for Portland on 11-of-13 shooting. The Trail Blazers have lost four in a row and 10 of 11.

Magic 90, Thunder 85

In Orlando, Fla., Wendell Carter Jr. scored 10 of his 30 points in the fourth quarter and Orlando handed Oklahoma City its ninth straight loss.

Carter also had 16 rebounds to help the Magic end a three-game losing streak.

Darius Bazley led Oklahoma City with 18 points. The Thunder shot 32.6%.

Warriors' Curry expects to return by start of playoffs

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)— Stephen Curry said he's confident he can return from a sprained left foot by the time the Golden State Warriors begin the playoffs.

The two-time league MVP wore a white boot on his foot Sunday as he addressed reporters for the first time since leaving Golden State's game Wednesday night after a collision with Boston's Marcus Smart.

With 12 games left in the regular season, Curry was asked if he felt he would be on the floor for the Warriors' first playoff game.

"Yeah, we've got enough time for that … but I'm an optimist," he said before Golden State's game against San Antonio.

Curry and Smart were going after a loose ball when Smart dove for it and crashed into Curry's leg. The play had Warriors coach Steve Kerr yelling at Smart from the sideline as Curry headed for the locker room.

AP

Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry talks to the media about his injury before an NBA basketball game against the San Antonio Spurs in San Francisco, Sunday, March 20, 2022.

"He didn't try to hurt me," Curry said. "There's a certain way he plays. I don't think many other people would have made the play he did, but I don't think it was malicious or dirty."

Curry was walking awkwardly in the boot Sunday. He said he's doing what he can in the weight room to stay in shape. By next week, he hopes to be back on the court doing some basketball activity but added that a cautious approach is necessary.

"From what I'm told, just in terms of ligaments around the injury and the bone that's underneath there, you want to not rush the beginning phases of healing because that's when you get the most progress," Curry said. "Then, when you do put the shoe back on and get back on the court and get reps, you're not dealing with crazy soreness or anything."

The Warriors are third in the Western Conference.

Source: Correa and Twins agree to $105.3M, 3-year deal

NEW YORK (AP)—Star shortstop Carlos Correa agreed early Saturday to a $105.3 million, three-year contract with the Minnesota Twins, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the agreement was subject to a successful physical.

The move ends Correa's seven-season tenure with the Houston Astros. He will earn $35.1 million annually under the deal and can opt out after the 2022 and 2023 seasons to become a free agent again.

Correa picking the Twins was a surprise, given they have lost 18 consecutive postseason games and finished last in the AL Central a year ago at 73-89.

His average salary becomes baseball's fourth-highest behind New York Mets pitcher Max Scherzer ($43.3 million), Yankees pitcher Gerrit Cole ($36 million) and Los Angeles Angels outfielder Mike Trout ($35.5 million).

A two-time All-Star who was the first pick in the 2012 amateur draft, Correa led the Astros' turnaround. Houston lost more than 100 games each year from 2011-13, then won its first World Series title by beating the Los Angeles Dodgers in seven games in 2017.

The Astros went on to AL pennants and World Series losses in 2019 and last year, gaining infamy for their cheating scandal that was revealed after the 2019 season.

Correa had a career-best 26 home runs last year to go along with a .279 batting average and 92 RBIs. He finished fifth in AL MVP voting and won his first Gold Glove. He has a .277 career average with 133 homers and 489 RBIs in seven major league seasons.

Correa, the 2015 AL Rookie of the Year, also has been a stellar postseason performer with 18 homers and 59 RBIs in 79 games.

Moving to the Twins will be a change for Correa and his family. His wife, the former Daniella Rodriguez, was Miss Texas USA in 2016.

Minnesota has not been to the World Series since winning the 1991 title and has lost its last eight postseason series since beating Oakland in a 2002 AL Division Series.

Correa has enjoyed great success in Minnesota as a visiting player, though. He has a .413 batting average (26 for 63) at Target Field with five homers and 20 RBIs in 15 games. His 1.205 OPS is his highest at any ballpark where he's played four or more games.

Since the end of the lockout, the Twins acquired right-hander Sonny Gray from Cincinnati and catcher Gary Sánchez and third baseman Gio Urshela from the New York Yankees.

Before the work stoppage, Minnesota signed pitcher Dylan Bundy to a $5 million, one-year deal.

Combined with Nick Castellanos' $100 million, five-year agreement with Philadelphia late Friday night, Correa's deal was the 14th since the World Series of nine figures.

Six of those were negotiated by agent Scott Boras, at a total of $1.0173 billion. In addition to agreements for Correa and Castellanos, he negotiated contracts for Corey Seager ($325 million) and Marcus Semien ($175 million) with Texas, Kris Bryant with Colorado ($182 million) and Scherzer with the New York Mets ($130 million).

AP

Houston Astros shortstop Carlos Correa (1) reacts as he rounds the bases after hitting a three-run home run against the New York Yankees during the sixth inning of Game 4 of baseball's American League Championship Series, o, Oct. 17, 2019, in New York.

Astros' Altuve 'surprised' by Correa's signing with Twins

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)—Houston Astros second baseman Jose Altuve officially learned that he'd have a new double play partner during a late-night phone call with Carlos Correa himself.

Altuve didn't foresee Correa signing with the Minnesota Twins.

"I was surprised. I wasn't expecting that," Altuve said Sunday. "Obviously we're going to miss him. He's a great player and a great guy inside the clubhouse. He was one of our leaders."

Correa reached a $105.3 million, three-year deal with the Twins on Friday night. The shortstop had been the most coveted free agent remaining on the market.

Altuve, a seven-time All-Star and the 2017 AL MVP, and Correa, a two-time All-Star, were mainstays in the middle of Houston's defense and at the top of the order since 2015. The duo helped lead the Astros to their lone World Series title in 2017 and return trips to the Series in 2019 and 2021.

A career .277 hitter with 133 home runs, Correa batted .279 with 26 homers and 92 RBIs last season and also won his first Gold Glove.

"Now that he's on another team, I'm happy for him," Altuve said. "He got a great deal. Happy for him. I know he's going to play good. He's going to make the Twins better."

The 31-year-old Altuve said he and the 27-year-old Correa pledged to remain close via frequent phone calls and video conferencing.

"We had dinner so many times," Altuve said. "We spent a lot of time in rooms together talking about different things. That's what I'm going to miss the most."

A few days before Correa's decision, Houston manager Dusty Baker tabbed Jeremy Pena the front-runner for the opening day start. Widely considered one of the Astros' top prospects, Pena is a career .291 hitter in the minors. He batted .287 with 10 homers in 30 games at Triple-A Sugar Land last season.

Pena, 24 and the son of former major leaguer Geronimo Pena, has a locker in the Astros' clubhouse next to Altuve.

"I'm happy for Jeremy that he might get the opportunity to come and play in the big leagues and establish himself as an everyday player," Altuve said.

While Baker would have liked to have Correa in the lineup, his signing removed a bit of the fog that had wafted into Houston's camp this spring.

"Nobody likes to be in an uncertain situation," Baker said. "Everybody likes clarity."

Still, some habits are hard to break.

Players arriving at the clubhouse on Sunday morning before the Astros-Washington exhibition game saw a familiar name written into the clean-up spot on the day's lineup card: Correa.

Baker's decision to hold his major league position players out of early games this spring allowed him start Carlos' bother, J.C., at designated hitter against the Nationals.

J.C. hit .310 with nine homers and 57 RBIs last season in 101 games split between Class A Fayetteville and High Class A Asheville.

Now learning to play catcher, J.C. enjoyed a six-hit game and two four-hit games last season, his first as a minor leaguer.

"That's a lot of hitting," Baker said.

MLB BRIEFS

Marlins, Soler agree on $36M, 3-year deal

MIAMI (AP)—The Miami Marlins have been seeking a big bat, and they're hoping reigning World Series MVP Jorge Soler fits the bill.A person with direct knowledge of the situation said Saturday the Marlins and Soler have agreed on a three-year, $36 million contract. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the deal was subject to a successful physical and had not been announced.Soler can opt out of the contract after 2022 and 2023.MLB.com was first to report the sides had an agreement in place.Soler is a two-time World Series winner, after helping the Chicago Cubs win the 2016 title and then making a major splash last fall when the Atlanta Braves captured the crown.He batted .300 in Atlanta's six-game win over Houston with three home runs, all of them memorable. He led off the World Series with a homer, the first player in 117 editions of the Fall Classic to pull off that feat. A pinch-hit drive in Game 4 broke a tie and put Atlanta one win from the championship, and in the clinching Game 6 his three-run shot in the third inning broke a scoreless tie and put the Braves ahead for good.Marlins general manager Kim Ng said as Miami opened camp that the team had two needs: an outfielder — particularly a center fielder, which Soler hasn't been, as he's primarily played right — and offense.Soler does fit that bill.

Reports: Red Sox sign Rockies' Trevor Story to play 2B

FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP)—The Red Sox have reportedly agreed to terms with Rockies All-Star shortstop Trevor Story on a six-year, $140 million contract that would bring him to Boston to play second base.The deal, which was first reported by USA Today and confirmed by multiple outlets, gives the Red Sox a long-term answer at second, which has been in flux since former AL MVP Dustin Pedroia was first injured in 2017, and leaves Xander Bogaerts in place at shortstop. The team also has a backup plan on the left side of the infield if Bogaerts opts out of his contract at the end of this season."He's a big bat. We know what he does defensively already. I think that bat would play really well at Fenway just with that short porch over there," Bogaerts told MLB.com last week when the deal was first rumored."It would be nice if we could get an addition like that after some of the big names that we lost to free agency or traded away," Bogaerts said. "That's a big boy. That's a big bat right there. That's an impact player."Story is the last to sign of a free agent shortstop class that sent Corey Seager to Texas (10 years, $325 million); Javier Báez to Detroit (six, $140 million); and, just this weekend, Carlos Correa to Minnesota (three, $105 million). Marcus Semien, a longtime shortstop who played second base for Toronto last season, signed a seven-year, $175 million contract with the Rangers.Story is a lifetime .272 hitter with 158 homers and 450 RBIs in 745 career games. He has benefitted from the thin air in Denver, hitting .303 with 95 homers and 279 RBIs at Coors Field and .241 with 63 homers and 171 RBIs on the road.With Story at second, Kiké Hernández could settle into center field and Christian Arroyo becomes a utility bat off the bench. Red Sox manager Alex Cora declined to comment on the reports after Sunday's spring training game against Baltimore, saying they were rumors. Even before the deal was announced, the news was welcomed inside the Red Sox clubhouse."It sparks the team," pitcher Nate Eovaldi told MLB.com. "We know that they (the front office) want to win but then to add another big piece to the organization like that would be huge."

Duke tops MSU, into Sweet 16 in Coach K's final NCAA tourney

Duke survived a tense finish against Michigan State and extended Mike Krzyzewski's final NCAA Tournament run, beating Tom Izzo's Spartans 85-76 on Sunday in the Hall of Fame coaches' bittersweet last tussle.

Star freshman Paolo Banchero scored 19 points and muscled in the go-ahead drive through contact with 2:05 left, putting the Blue Devils (30-6) ahead to stay in the record-extending 1,200th win of Krzyzewski's career. Duke reached the Sweet 16 for the 26th time under Coach K, who announced last summer that his 42nd season with the Blue Devils would be his last.

Those coaching milestones came against his longtime friend and frequent rival. The 75-year-old Krzyzewski — who has five NCAA titles and a record-tying 12 Final Four appearances — improved to 13-3 against the 67-year-old Izzo, who won the 2000 national championship and has reached eight Final Fours.

Krzyzewski will continue his push for a career-capping championship when the second-seeded Blue Devils head to San Francisco to play Texas Tech next week in the West Region semifinals.

AP

Duke's Paolo Banchero (5) greets head coach Mike Krzyzewski after a win against Michigan State following a college basketball game in the second round of the NCAA tournament, Sunday, March 20, 2022, in Greenville, S.C.

Texas Tech 59, Notre Dame 53

In San Diego, Kevin McCullar made an emphatic dunk with 15 seconds left to cap a 10-1 closing run for No. 3 seed Texas Tech, which beat Notre Dame to advance to the Sweet 16.

Kevin Obanor had 15 points and 15 rebounds, and McCullar and Bryson Williams each scored 14 for Texas Tech (27-9), which made its third round of 16 in the past four tournaments and fifth in school history.

SOUTH REGION
Houston 68, Illinois 53

In Pittsburgh, Taze Moore scored 21 points, Jamal Shead added 18 and Houston, a Final Four team last season, advanced to the Sweet 16 by beating Illinois, which bowed out in the opening weekend for the second straight year.

The fifth-seeded Cougars (31-5), who lost their two best players to season-ending injuries, are headed home to Texas for the South Region semifinals, which will be in San Antonio, about a three-hour drive from Houston. They will face Arizona.

Kyler Edwards added 15 points for Houston.

Arizona 85, TCU 80, OT

In San Diego, Bennedict Mathurin made a 3-pointer to force overtime and scored six more points in the extra session, and top-seeded Arizona outlasted ninth-seeded TCU.

Mathurin finished with 30 points and Christian Koloko scored 28, including a putback dunk that slammed the door on the Horned Frogs with 9 seconds left in OT after Mathurin missed a 3.

Koloko was 12 of 13 from the field, including five dunks, but the rest of the Wildcats were 19 of 55, including 5 of 27 on 3-pointers.

Still, Arizona's two stars did enough for the Wildcats (33-3) to avoid becoming the second No. 1 seed to fall during this tournament's opening weekend.

Villanova 71, Ohio State 61

In Pittsburgh, Collin Gillespie scored 20 points, Eric Dixon hit a big 3-pointer late and second-seeded Villanova fended off seventh-seeded Ohio State.

The Wildcats (28-7) earned their eighth trip to the Sweet 16 under Jay Wright after surviving a second-half push from the Buckeyes (20-12), who trimmed a 15-point deficit to two before Villanova regained its footing.

MIDWEST REGION
Iowa State 54, Wisconsin 49

In Milwaukee, Gabe Kalscheur scored 22 points and 11th-seeded Iowa State surprised Wisconsin in the Badgers' backyard to advance to the Sweet 16.

Izaiah Brockington added 10 points as the gritty Cyclones used their tough defense to hold off Johnny Davis and company in front of a raucous pro-Wisconsin crowd about 80 miles away from the school's Madison campus.

After winning just two games last season, Iowa State (22-12) advanced to the Sweet 16 for the first time since 2016 and the sixth time in school history. It will play Miami on Friday in Chicago, a surprising 11-vs.-10-seed matchup.

Miami 79, Auburn 61

In Greenville, S.C., Isaiah Wong scored 21 points, Kameron McGusty had 20 and No. 10 seed Miami neutralized second-seeded Auburn's Jabari Smith and Walker Kessler to reach its first Sweet 16 in six years.

Charlie Moore added 15 points and eight assists as Miami (25-10) advanced to the round of 16 for the fourth time overall and third time in coach Jim Larranaga's 10 seasons. And the Hurricanes did it against Auburn's frontcourt of future NBA big men.

EAST REGION
Purdue 81, Texas 71

In Milwaukee, Jaden Ivey made a critical 3-pointer with 1:01 left and finished with 18 points, and Purdue finally got past Texas coach Chris Beard in March.

Trevion Williams scored 22 points to lead the Boilermakers, who capitalized on a major disparity at the free-throw line to reach the Sweet 16. Purdue had 46 attempts, making 33, while the Longhorns went 7 of 12 on free throws.

The third-seeded Boilermakers (29-7) advanced to an East Region semifinal on Friday in Philadelphia against this year's out-of-nowhere tourney darling, 15th-seeded Saint Peter's. ***(AP)***

JIN

From Page 20

wasn't satisfied with my results from last year's NMC Golf Open tournament."

She said conditions last Saturday were better than expected although the weather was very hot.

"My driver and putts were working pretty well during the tournament. With my driver shots, I hit most of the fairways and I had several excellent putts," she said.

Jin is dedicating her victory in the Northern Marianas College fundraiser to her family, the CNMI National Golf Team, and her coaches.

"They all helped me a lot with improving my game. I also think it's a great preparation for the upcoming Mini Games because I can test my mentality," she said.

Togawa, meanwhile, won the ladies low net with Nirimai Koebel coming in second. Net scores were unavailable as of press time.

"Saturday's east course green was in great condition with fast and tricky position. Weather was so hot I was blessed with people in the same group and was able to play calmly," said the CNMI women's golf national team coach.

Jin and Togawa were named a player and coach, respectively, of the CNMI National Golf Team for the Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022 from June 17 to 25 this year.

In the optional play competition, closest to pin winners were Ned Norita in hole No. 4 (3'4"), Freddy Cataluna in hole No. 6 (54"), Roy Ada in hole No. 11 (108"), and Championship Flight winner Kim Gi Yeong in hole No. 15 (75").

Results of the Senior's Flight and the C Flight will be reported in tomorrow's issue of *Saipan Tribune.*

VIZION

From Page 20

team's 21-point fourth quarter to lead Vizion Insurance to the 5-point victory.

Pastrana shone all game long and finished with 23 markers, 2 points more than the 21 logged by teammate Andy Mortos. Gotengco and Galang shared scoring honors for HBR International with 15 points apiece in the loss.

In the second game, Marianas Dental Center wiped the floor clean with Super Tech, 100-50, to level its win-loss count to 2-2, while exacting Super Tech its fourth loss in as many outings.

The third game was called a forfeit in favor of The Game after Team Marianas players failed to show up. The Game and Team Marianas thus find themselves tied in the open division team standings at 3-1.

First Game

Vizion Insurance 78 – Pastrana 23, Mortos 21, Ruedo 17, Baul 9, Regaton 5, Santos 2, Bonus 1.

HBR International 73 – Galang 15, Gotengco 15, Reyes 10, Sapo 9, Anotnio 9, Rabb 9, Boringgot 3, Romo 2, Agusto 1.

Scoring by quarters: 21-15, 34-43, 57-57, 78-73.

Second Game

MDC 100 – Kim 15, Darag 14, De Guzman 11, Moses 10, Ferrer 10, Tengco 10, Beno 9, Ibanez 8, Sembrano 6, Montes 5, Elchico 2,

Super Tech 50 – Santos 11, Daluyen 9, Tibayan 7, Ege 6, Iguel 6, Agulto 5, Estores 4, Caraig 2, Bartolome 2,

Scoring by quarters: 23-13, 49-21, 72-37, 100-50.

FORMER

From Page 20

Filipino Organization Basketball League, Emon Lodge Basketball League, Inter-Government Basketball League, and the Rotary Club of Saipan Youth Basketball League.

Artillaga moved back to his native Philippines in 2009 and prior to his passing was elected Barangay Council member of his hometown of Del Remedio in San Pablo, Laguna.

Former BANMI official Abner Venus, who is Artillaga's cousin-in-law, said the former Saipan referee is known as a hard worker and a person who is friendly, loving, and family-oriented who was respected by his family and peers both in the Philippines and Saipan.

"As a person, he was very reliable and well respected. Eric made sure that his job was done diligently and was well-liked by everyone. As a referee, he was well respected and liked amongst the players and his colleagues. Our family will greatly miss him as he was a good leader and a hard worker," he said.

Omar Ajoste, FIBA Level 1 coach and 670 Sonics Basketball Club coach, in behalf of his organization and family extended his condolences to Artillaga's family.

"I knew Eric when I was during my teenage years as he was officiating basketball games at the [Gilbert C.] Ada Gymnasium and other basketball events on Saipan. Also, I was part of the planning and coordination team with kuya Abner Venus along with 670 Sonics board members and coach Jesse Tudela when we went to the Philippines to compete in 2016. Eric took care of our 670 Sonics Basketball team in July 2016 when our basketball team competed in Laguna, Philippines. This was a blessing to have our non-profit organization experience what basketball life was outside the CNMI."

Ajoste added that Artillaga was a true advocate, supporter, official, and mentor of CNMI basketball.

"Eric played a big role in the development of basketball in the CNMI. Eric was committed and dedicated to the sport of basketball, most importantly, to our youth's basketball development in ensuring the fundamentals of playing the sport and the rules of the game. We, 670 Sonics, say 'Thank you, and may you rest in peace, Eric,"" he said.

Artillaga is survived by his wife, Laisa, his parents, Emer and Cristy, his siblings Emerson, Erwin, Marah, Christine, and Edward James, as well as by his many aunties, uncles, and cousins.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	43	27	.614	—
Boston	44	28	.611	—
Toronto	40	31	.563	3½
Brooklyn	37	34	.521	6½
New York	30	41	.423	13½

Southeast Division

y-Miami	47	24	.662	—
Charlotte	36	35	.507	11
Atlanta	35	36	.493	12
Washington	30	40	.429	16½
Orlando	19	53	.264	28½

Central Division

Milwaukee	44	27	.620	—
Chicago	41	29	.586	2½
Cleveland	41	30	.577	3
Indiana	25	47	.347	19½
Detroit	19	52	.268	25

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Memphis	49	23	.681	—
Dallas	43	28	.606	5½
New Orleans	30	41	.423	18½
San Antonio	28	44	.389	21
Houston	17	54	.239	31½

Northwest Division

Utah	45	26	.634	—
Minnesota	42	30	.583	3½
Denver	42	30	.583	3½
Portland	26	44	.371	18½
Oklahoma City	20	51	.282	25

Pacific Division

x-Phoenix	58	14	.806	—
Golden State	47	24	.662	10½
L.A. Clippers	36	37	.493	22½
L.A. Lakers	30	41	.423	27½
Sacramento	25	48	.342	33½

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Shamet hits key 3-pointer in OT, Suns rally to beat Kings

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Sports

Duke tops MSU, into Sweet 16 in Coach K's final NCAA tourney

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Jin, Yuko are top ladies golfers

NMC

Zhimin Jin, center and the Ladies Flight low gross winner of the 17th Annual NMC Foundation Golf Tournament, poses with, from left, Northern Marianas College regents Michelle Lin Sablan, Jesse Tudela, and Zenie Mafnas, NMC president Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, NMC regent Irene Torres, NMC Foundation board member Roman Tudela, and NMC Board of Regents chair Charles Cepeda during the awards ceremony last Saturday at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort.

NMC

Yuko Togawa, center and the Ladies Flight low net winner of the 17th Annual NMC Foundation Golf Tournament, poses with, from left, Northern Marianas College regents Michelle Lin Sablan, Jesse Tudela, and Zenie Mafnas, NMC president Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, NMC regent Irene Torres, NMC Foundation board member Roman Tudela, and NMC Board of Regents chair Charles Cepeda during the awards ceremony last Saturday at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

CNMI national golfer Zhimin Jin and national women's golf coach Yuko Togawa topped the Ladies Flight low gross and low net, respectively, of the 17th Annual NMC Foundation Golf Tournament last Saturday at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort.

Jin, a 14-year-old freshman at Marianas High School, won the low gross with her 5-over par 77. She fired a 40 in the front nine with birdies in holes No. 2 and 6. She then played superbly in the back nine, recording a 1-over par 37 that included an amazing eagle in hole No. 14.

"First of all, I feel very proud winning the ladies flight. I really wanted to win, especially for this tournament because I

See JIN on Page 19

Former Saipan referee passes away

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Former Saipan referee Eric B. Artillaga, right, receives his FIBA Oceania referee certification from former FIBA Oceania secretary general Steve Smith in this undated photo prior to the 2006 Micronesian Games on Saipan.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Former Saipan referee Eric B. Artillaga passed away suddenly last weekend after an apparent heart attack while vacationing with his wife in Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte in the Philippines. He was just 41 years old.

Artillaga first arrived on Saipan in 2005 and worked at Microl Corp. During his free time, he served as a referee under the Basketball Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, the precursor of the Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation.

He was so competent in officiating basketball games that he soon became a certified FIBA Oceania referee that allowed him to officiate both men's and women's basketball games during the 2006 Micronesian Games held on Saipan.

After the Micro Games, Artillaga continued to officiate other leagues such as the Men's Island-wide Basketball League, Mobil Co-Ed Basketball League, Marianas Interscholastic Organization Basketball League, United

See FORMER on Page 19

Vizion Insurance beats HBR Int'l in open division

MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Vizion Insurance won its second game of the season after edging HBR International, 78-73, in their open division game of the Inaugural SCLC Basketball League last Friday at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Gymnasium in Gualo Rai.

The win improved the team's win-loss record to 2-3, while dealing their opponents' second loss in five games.

Vizion Insurance got off to a strong start with Rodel Pastrana and Ariel Baul pumping 6 points apiece to give the team a 21-15 lead after the first quarter.

Tables were turned in the second quarter though as Jaime Antonio, Jerome Reyes, and Julienne Gotengco scattered 19 points among them as HBR International entered the halftime break with a 43-34 spread.

HBR International's J.R. Galang and Pastrana were engaged in a dogfight come the third quarter, as both teams played evenly and entered the fourth and final quarter all tied up at 57-all.

The payoff period saw the close battle continue with neither team giving any quarter. In the end, Pastrana finally got some support from Ronald Rueda as the two accounted for all but 5 points of the

See VIZION on Pag19

MARK RABAGO

Vizion Insurance's Rodel Pastrana, shown here in a file photo, scored 23 points to lead his team to victory against HBR International in their open division game of the Inaugural SCLC Basketball League last Friday at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Gymnasium in Gualo Rai.